

FACTORS IMPACTING TEACHER RETENTION IN URBAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the Education Department

Carson-Newman University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

By

Lindsay R. Starnes

April 16, 2018



Dissertation Approval

Student Name: Lindsay Rhea Starnes

Dissertation Title: Factors Impacting Teacher Retention in Urban Elementary Schools

This dissertation has been approved and accepted by the faculty of the Education Department, Carson-Newman University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree, Doctor of Education.

Dissertation Committee:

Dissertation Chair: Dr. Steve A. Davidson

Methodologist Member: Dr. P. Mark Taylor

Content Member: Dr. Tony Dalton

Approved by the Dissertation Committee: April 2, 2018

Copyright © 2018 by Lindsay Rhea Starnes

All Rights Reserved.

Abstract

Teacher attrition has increased over the past 15 years, with school communities that large urban populations and concentrated poverty being the most impacted by this issue. Research shows that urban teachers are leaving their posts at a higher rate than student dropouts (National Commission on Teaching America's Future, 2007). The purpose of this qualitative study was to identify factors that impacted teacher retention in urban elementary schools. The study utilized semi-structured interviews from six current urban elementary school administrators, as well as interviews with six effective educators that left the urban school environment for a suburban or rural educational setting. Through the utilization of interviews, the researcher was able to identify commonalities amongst the participants' responses. Through this study, the participants identified stress and the lack of autonomy as a factor that negatively impacted teacher retention in urban elementary schools. Participants also identified factors that would positively impact teacher retention, such as support and recognition. The desired outcome of this research is to positively impact teacher retention in urban elementary schools through the implementation of identified strategies that were identified through the research.

Acknowledgements

To my children, Laura and William, thank you for being my “cheerleaders” over these past three years! Laura, I will never forget how excited you were when I finished my dissertation! Your encouragement means the world to me.

Thank you Cherrye Robertson and Edna Varner for joining me on this crazy adventure that I talked you into three years ago. I am so thankful for your friendships and am blessed to call you colleagues.

Last, I would like to thank my husband, Brent Starnes. This journey would not be possible without your support, patience, and encouragement! You have taken on numerous roles in order for me to pursue my goal of obtaining my Ed.D degree, and I am truly blessed to have you as my husband and best friend.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Chapter One: Introduction.....	1
Research Problem.....	2
Purpose of the Study.....	2
Research Question.....	3
Rationale for the Study.....	3
The Researcher.....	4
Definition of Terms.....	5
Chapter Two: Review of Literature.....	7
Broad Historical Literature.....	7
Theoretical Lens.....	9
Conceptual Framework.....	16
Definition of Terms.....	17
Literature (Comprehensive).....	18
Negative Impact of Teacher Attrition.....	19
Urban School Challenges.....	21
Retention of Effective Teachers.....	35
Current Strategies for Decreasing Teacher Attrition in Urban Schools.....	37
Chapter Three: Methodology.....	46
Description of Qualitative Research.....	46
Description of the specific Research Approach.....	46
Description of the Study Participants and Setting.....	48
Data Collection Procedures and Data Analysis.....	48
Ethical Considerations.....	51
Limitations and Delimitations.....	51
Chapter Four: Findings.....	53

Analysis of Data.....	55
Interview Questions for Administrators.....	56
Administrators’ Perceptions of Factors that Impact Teacher Attrition	57
Administrators’ Perceptions of Retaining Effective Teachers.....	61
Interview Questions for Teachers.....	65
Teachers’ Perceptions of Factors that Impact Teacher Attrition.....	66
Teachers’ Perceptions of Factors that Positively Impact Teacher Retention.....	70
District Exit Interviews.....	76
Summary.....	76
Chapter Five: Findings, Implications, and Recommendations.....	78
Summary of the Study.....	78
Findings/Interpretations.....	79
Conclusions.....	82
Recommendations.....	83
Recommendations for Future Research.....	89
Summary.....	89
References.....	90

Table of Figures, Tables, and Illustrations

Table 4.1 Demographics of School Administrator Participants.....52

Table 4.2 Demographics of Teacher Participants.....52

Figure 4.3 Administrators-Factors that Negatively Impact Teacher Retention.....56

Figure 4.4 Administrators-Factors that Positively Impact Teacher Retention.....61

Figure 4.5 Teachers-Factors that Negatively Impact Teacher Retention.....65

Figure 4.5 Teachers-Factors that Positively Impact Teacher Retention.....69

Table 4.7 District Exit Interviews.....75

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Urban school educators encounter numerous challenges teaching within the urban setting. Urban schools are frequently marked by higher concentrations of poverty, greater racial and ethnic diversity, larger concentrations of immigrant populations, and more frequent rates of student mobility (Kincheloe, 2010). Approximately one in five children in the United States live in poverty, according to the American Psychological Association, a status that affects more than housing status and food supply. Children from low-income families face increased risk factors in their educational life. Poverty affects student brain development, relationships with peers and the ability to complete a formal education. Poverty's effects on the psychological and emotional state of children contribute to both student interest in school and overall happiness. According to a study by the Connecticut Commission for Children, twice as many low-income parents suffer from depression as other parents. Depression in parents is often connected with poor behavior in school and problems developing relationships with classmates. Home life influences a child's educational growth, including vocabulary and language skills. A study published by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development found that children of higher income parents increased their vocabularies at twice the rate of children in poverty. Additionally, delays in brain development are 1.3 times more common in children who live below the poverty line nationally, according to the Connecticut Commission on Families. These issues are often demonstrated by a large number of students performing poorly on achievement tests, as well as performing below grade level expectations. Research shows that teachers in low-income, urban communities have been shown to have low expectations of their students (Dance, 2002) and believe them to have excessive behavioral challenges (Hampton, Peng & Ann, 2008). Teachers within an urban school environment often believe that their students are less motivated to succeed with school (Frankenberg, 2012), and have disproportionately disinterested or

uninvolved parents (Watson, Charner-Laird, Kirkpatrick, Szezesiul, & Gordon, 2006). These challenges within an urban education environment have made efforts to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers for students in these schools extremely difficult (Ingersoll, 2004).

Research Problem

The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) noted teacher attrition has increased over the past 15 years, with some school districts reporting a higher dropout rate for teachers than students. Unfortunately, urban communities with high concentrations of poverty are the hardest hit.

Research showed that underserved schools lose 20 percent of their faculty each year (Ingersoll, 2004). In fact, two-thirds of educators (66 percent) exit within the first five years of teaching (New York University, 2017). Many novice teachers experience a "cultural mismatch" or lack of "cultural synchronization" as they walk into classrooms with students who have extremely different life experiences and backgrounds than their own (Monroe & Obidah, 2004).

Purpose of the Study

The research reported in this article is utilized to identify the primary factors of high percentages of teacher attrition in urban schools, in order for leaders within schools and school districts to address the issues and determine possible solutions to the problem of teacher retention. Other areas of research have focused on various strategies implemented within school districts to retain effective teachers. The study concentrated on identifying and understanding the rationale behind why teachers leave urban schools.

Research Question

This research on the challenges facing novice teachers in urban school lends itself to the following question:

1. What are the primary factors that impact teacher retention in urban elementary schools?

Rationale for the Study

The NCTAF estimated the cost of teacher turnover across the country at \$7.3 billion annually, including the cost of recruiting, hiring, and training new teachers. Attrition costs vary somewhat between districts, with urban districts sustaining more budget damage than rural districts. The fiscal impact of teacher turnover is great as schools and districts must fund additional recruitment programs, implement interview and hiring procedures, and provide additional professional development—not to mention the loss in experience and expertise (Guin, 2004).

This trend of new teachers leaving underserved schools becomes a vicious cycle. Students in low-income schools are more likely to be disruptive in class. Novice teachers who lack effective classroom management skills are more likely to leave for another school or leave the profession entirely. New teachers arrive on the scene and students act up because they feel they've been abandoned and distrust the unknown teacher. And the cycle continues.

High rates of teacher turnover may have a significant negative effect on school health and climate, complicating the ability of schools to plan and implement new programs, conduct professional development, and provide support systems for school faculty. Students in schools with high rates of teacher turnover may score lower on standardized tests (Guin, 2004).

The Researcher

Having spent my entire teaching and administrative career in urban schools, I have witnessed the negative effects of teachers leaving the field of urban education. When I began teaching in 2004, my school district faced a crisis. Of the twenty lowest-performing elementary schools, nine were in the county in which I taught. No other school district in the state had more than four schools in the bottom twenty. All nine of these low-performing schools were urban, poor, and largely minority. Teacher turnover rates were high; the faculties were made up of young, inexperienced, and, in some cases, marginal teachers. The first day of school often found numerous classrooms with no teacher at all, with staffing sometimes incomplete until 2-3 weeks into the school year. Student performance was abysmal. On average, only 12% of third graders in these schools could read at or above grade level (Public Education Foundation, 2012).

After graduating from college, my first teaching position was teaching 5th grade at one of the nine lowest performing schools within my state. Throughout my career, I have held the roles of teacher, model classroom teacher, instructional coach, assistant principal, and currently principal in two of the identified lowest performing schools in the state. Thirteen years later, urban schools are continuing to face the same issues in regard to retaining effective teachers. In my current position as a first-year principal at an urban school, over sixty percent (60%) of teachers in my building are new due to high teacher turnover from the previous year. Within my school district, state department of education, and the U.S. Department of Education, this trend of high teacher turnover continues within urban schools. As a leader in an urban school, I want to identify the primary factors as to why teachers leave in order to prevent high teacher turnover rates that ultimately negatively impact student achievement.

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this research, several key terms will be essential in understanding the focus of the work.

Stayers are those teachers who remained at the same school (The Condition of Education, 2016). In this study, the researcher will examine the qualities of stayers, as well as their rationale for continuing to teach in urban schools.

Movers are those teachers who moved to a different school (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016). Movers would consist of teachers who have left an urban school and transferred to other schools within the district or have moved to another location.

Leavers are those teachers who left the profession (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016). Many leavers are required to discontinue their job in the teaching field due to effectiveness scores within the teacher evaluation system.

Individual Resilience Theory identifies character traits in teachers that impact their perseverance of teaching in an urban school. Traits include: coherence, ability to thrive, hardiness, resourcefulness, self-efficacy, locus of control, potency, stamina, and personal causation (American Psychological Association, 2014). This theory will be examined through this study to determine if the traits identified within the theory impact teacher retention.

Teacher Turnover is the departure of teachers from their teaching jobs (Ingersoll, 2001).

Attrition refers to the phenomenon of teachers leaving the profession (Ingersoll, 2001).

Migration describes the transfer of teachers from one school to another (Ingersoll, 2001).

Irreplaceables are effective teachers in urban schools that are extremely difficult to

replace when transferring schools or leaving the profession.

Summary

High-poverty schools have some of the greatest teacher attrition and shortage challenges. Teacher attrition issues have the biggest impact on the most vulnerable students. Students in these high-poverty communities are extremely reliant on their schools and the quality of education they receive. Teacher turnover and attrition are key areas that must be addressed in order to evade this educational crisis that deeply impacts the larger society.

CHAPTER TWO:

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter provides a review of the literature and research related to the study of teacher attrition. The review of literature is divided into three sections, (a) broad historical literature of teacher attrition, (b) negative impact of teacher attrition, (c) teacher attrition in urban schools, and (d) the role of irreplaceables in hard to staff schools.

Broad Historical Literature on Teacher Attrition

The teaching field was originally identified as a transitory line of work for women before they began raising families, and temporary employment for men until they transferred out of the classroom and became administrators within a school (Riggs, 2013). This system was established as the historical arrangement of the education system. Since the 1970s and early 1980s, research shows teacher attrition to be a problem. Charters (1970), Mark and Anderson (1978), and Murnane (1981) recorded that 25% of all people with teaching certificates never begin teaching or leave teaching within a few years. Murnane noted that in the early 1970s there was .33 percent probability that a first-year teacher would leave, whereas in the late 1960s the study predicted the leave rate at a .16 probability in the first three years.

Every four years, the National Center for Education Statistics provides the public with the best available *national* estimates of teacher attrition and mobility. The estimates come from the Teacher Follow-Up Survey (TFS), which is a supplement to the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), a much larger national survey of teachers that is also conducted every four years (Di Carlo, 2015). The conventional wisdom among many commentators, particularly those critical of test-based accountability and recent education reform, is that teacher attrition (teachers leaving

the profession) and mobility (teachers switching schools) are on the rise (Di Carlo, 2015). The Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS) is sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the Institute of Education Sciences on behalf of the U.S. Department of Education and is conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. TFS is a follow-up survey of selected elementary and secondary school teachers who participate in the NCES Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), a nationally representative sample survey of public and private K–12 schools, principals, and teachers in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. School districts associated with public schools and library media centers in public schools are also part of SASS (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016). According to the Teacher Follow-Up survey, since 1988 there have been almost 15 years of steady increase in the proportion of teachers leaving the profession, as well as teacher turnover (leaving plus moving). However, studies show that the movement has been stable since 2004-2005. To date, though, differences in the scope of the teacher retention challenge across states and districts have remained poorly defined. Furthermore, while national teacher retention rates may be useful for informing largescale policy discussions, retention varies widely across states, districts, and schools. The SASS/TFS sampling strategy and small sample size make them of limited use for examining variation in teacher retention rates across localities. Urban school systems struggle to retain teachers (Marinell & Coca, 2013). One of the biggest problems in America’s education crisis is how many teachers drop out before getting much experience under their belts. Almost a quarter of new public school teachers leave the profession within the first three years, according to a 2007 survey of teachers conducted by the U.S. Department of Education. This attrition rate is close to the turnover rate for rookie police officers. The National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (NCTAF) notes teacher turnover has been increasing over the past 15 years,

with some school districts reporting a higher dropout rate for teachers than students. Another interesting finding from the TFS is the difference in turnover rates by teacher ethnicity. Specifically, total turnover among white, non-Hispanic teachers was 15 percent (7.5 leaver, 7.5 mover), compared with 21.8 percent among black teachers and 20.6 percent among Hispanic teachers. This is, however, due in no small part to the fact that minority teachers are disproportionately employed in higher-poverty schools, where attrition and mobility are more common among all teachers, regardless of race (Di Carlo, 2015). Unfortunately, underserved communities are the hardest hit.

Theoretical Lens and Related Theoretical Literature

Due to the many obstacles that teachers encounter in today's classrooms, teachers are required to have the capacity and ability to adapt to meet the various needs in order to promote the academic success of all students and to prepare students to perform effectively with federal and state accountability standards. Resiliency is a critical element that is essential in meeting these challenges and remain in the education profession. Teacher resilience is defined as the ability to adjust to varied situations and increase one's competence in the face of adverse conditions (Gordon & Coscarelli, 1996). Teacher retention is a problematic issue in the United States; teachers who lack the resiliency trait may have a negative impact on teacher retention (Taylor, 2013).

Henderson (2003) identified six protective elements that were strongly connected with resiliency. The researchers determined that each of the six factors might contribute to cultivating resiliency for educators; however, they may not do so in an equal manner. The six protective factors are: (a) purpose and expectations, (b) nurture and support, (c) positive connections, (d) meaningful participation, (e) life guiding skills, and (f) clear and consistent boundaries.

Polidore's resilience theory is aligned to the issue of teacher attrition. There must be an emphasis placed on building teacher capacity and longevity in order for teacher attrition to decrease (Levine & Haselkorn, 2008). The retention of teachers in the education profession requires a broader focus than the current reasons for teacher attrition such as low salaries and the effects of No Child Left Behind regulations (Curtis, 2012). However, developing and fostering resilience could become the vehicle through which competency is developed and retention of teachers is increased.

Polidore's (2004) theory on resilience was developed utilizing data gathered from three African American female teachers who participated in a qualitative research study. The three educators had extensive careers in education despite subjugation to serious hardships. Polidore's resilience theory contains eight themes of resilience: religion, flexible locus of control, an individual's ability to view adverse situations positively or optimistic bias, autonomy, commitment, change, relationships, and education viewed as important.

Resilience Theme One: Religion

Walsh (1998) stated that one's faith develops early in life when fundamental meanings are being shaped. All participants in Polidore's study had core beliefs that were grounded in religion, spirituality, and faith. Introduced to organized religion at a very young age, the participants remained active members of their churches and find fulfillment and purpose from their religious affiliation. During the challenges within the urban classroom environment, religious upbringing and faith provided support and guidance of how to treat others, including administrators, teachers, students and parents from other races and cultures.

Resilience Theme Two: Flexible Locus of Control

Flexible locus of control, a concept based on one's ability to use both internal and external loci of control, was exhibited throughout the narratives of the participants in Polidore's study. Throughout the study, participants displayed the ability to endure challenges encountered while teaching in urban schools. The participants strived to meet the expectations of their school environments, while also proving competence as classroom teachers to administrators, parents, students, and teachers of other races and cultures. This reflected a belief in internal locus of control. The educators believed that they were competent individuals who sincerely cared about the well-being and academic success of their students, therefore the values they possessed did not change simply because the students in their classes were made up of ethnically diverse students from poverty.

Resilience Theme Three: Optimistic Bias

The personal challenges and the difficulties that occurred during the teaching careers of the participants in this study were mixed. From teaching with retired textbooks to working in inferior facilities, the participants always remained optimistic throughout their situations. Their optimistic bias resulted in successful teaching careers and other positive experiences within the community in which they taught. Instead of concentrating on difficulties, the participants remained confident in their talents and abilities to positively impact children, all children. Optimistic bias was a predominant theme throughout various stages of each participant's life. Their sense of hopefulness and optimism was shared with the students in their classrooms and school community through their encouragement and an emphasis on the importance of acquiring an education.

Resilience Theme Four: Autonomy

Resilient individuals are accountable for their own actions. The teaching profession can be very isolating and lonely; however, the participants in the study enjoyed the opportunities to be on their own and inventive in meeting the needs of their students. Teachers, parents, and administrators from other backgrounds and cultures brought additional situations that hindered with the ability of the participants to be completely autonomous as their competence, skills, and prior teacher preparation were tested. However, determined to remain autonomous, and to prove themselves as capable and competent individuals, the participants took responsibility for their own thoughts and actions while in difficult situations. Participants acquired the initiative to make modifications when needed, both inside the classroom when creating lessons for their students and outside of the classroom when networking with teachers, parents, and administrators from other races and cultures. Participants also valued the viewpoints of others and did not allow those viewpoints to regulate their thoughts and actions. Participants only attempted to adjust their views by continuing to do what they had always done, to work diligently and to identify when another course of action was required.

Resilience Theme Five: Commitment

The resilience theme of commitment was a predominant theme identified in the narratives of the participants in Polidore's research. Participant commitment to their families, teaching career, and the community of residence maneuvered their effectiveness as teachers. The academic success of students was a priority (Taylor, 2013).

The commitment of resilient individuals connects with positive relationships and belief system. Driven by the positive relationships with their personal families, friends, colleagues, and

students, participants were devoted to the teaching profession, as supported by the total number of years of experience before they retired. Participants defined themselves as hard workers and diligently worked through challenging situations to provide a positive impact for students. Their devotion to educating children transcended the classroom. Outside of school, the participants worked with children as mentors and served as positive role models as reputable citizens of their communities.

Resilience Theme Six: Enjoys Change

Throughout the narratives of the participants in Polidore's study, the attitudes and behaviors specified the disposition to adapt to change during the various circumstances that arose in their lives, which encompassed their teaching careers. When the participants were transferred to new schools, they made successful transitions to new environments, although difficult and unclear at times, because of the ability to change.

Resilience Theme Seven: Positive Relationships

Positive people constantly surrounded the participants in this study throughout the course of their lives. This circle of support includes family members, such as parents and siblings, other relatives, caring spouses, encouraging colleagues, and friendships that were created through various club memberships and community organizations. These positive relationships contributed to the overall sense of well-being, self-esteem, purpose-driven lives, and efficacy. These relationships were especially significant throughout the challenges endured by the participants while teaching in the classroom.

Werner (1993) stated that resilient individuals become successful, despite being raised in adverse situations, because they had at least one unconditional relationship. Positive

relationships were a lifeline for the participants in Polidore's study before, during, and after their experiences as educators. Each participant's ability to remain focused on educating the children, despite the personal obstacles encountered, empowered her to be an effective teacher. Although some students within participants' classrooms presented some behavioral challenges, these teachers did not focus on the difficulties experienced, but rather, they focused on the relationships that have been developed with students over the course of their career.

Resilience Theme Eight: Education Viewed as Important

From a very young age, various individuals promoted the value of an education to the participants in this study. Not only had the importance of an education been instilled in the participants by their parents, their definitive career choice was the education profession. Through their love of teaching, the participants exhibited and instilled in their students the importance of obtaining an education. Students were inspired to work hard to recognize their potential. All participants within Polidore's study chose to continue to pursue their education even after obtaining a college degree by taking additional college hours. Two of the four participants earned a masters' degree. As a result of the commitment to being life-long learners, education became a way of life for the participants and continued through their involvement in various education-related activities and organizations.

Efficacy – An Additional Emergent Theme of Resilience

In addition to the eight themes of resilience included in Polidore's (2004) resilience theory, efficacy emerged as an overarching theme to the resilience themes optimistic bias and positive relationships. The term efficacy refers to the strong beliefs held by some about their professional competence, self-confidence, and both their moral and social purpose to serve as up

lifters within their school communities (Collins, 2000). Bandura (1997) stated that the individual beliefs a person has can influence how much effort is put forth, how long they will persist when faced with obstacles, and how resilient they are when attempting to cope with demands and challenges.

As Polidore (2004) also indicated in his study, education became a way of life for the participants in this study. Even as young children, the participant's parents emphasized the importance of education. Through challenging times that involved walking miles to school or transferring to another community in order to go to an accredited school, the participants were taught that no sacrifice was too great to acquire an education. Their parents stressed that education was the key to their accomplishments, and as a result, it became the chosen occupation and way of life for them. Obtaining a college education was a goal to be fulfilled, regardless of the financial difficulties. Educational attainment served as the motivation for them to become devoted teachers and to encourage their students to take education seriously. In addition to the classroom setting, the participants fulfilled their growing desire to be life-long learners by taking graduate courses, supporting new teachers, and through memberships in community groups.

Two concepts guide the framework of Polidore's research. The first concept is referred to as developmental perspective, which indicates that adults develop resilience, learn to survive, and conform over time, rather than a set of established traits (Walsh, 2006). The second concept of Polidore's study identifies ecological perspective, which consists of the realm of external or environmental impacts of an individual, such as family, school, work settings, or larger social systems across the life span (Walsh, 2006). The construct of this study also focused on the characteristics or themes of resilience as identified in Polidore's theory.

Bobek (2002) identified that adverse conditions related to the teaching profession compel teachers to be resilient. Additionally, when teachers are resilient, they are better equipped to evaluate adverse situations and determine options for coping, as well as implementing the appropriate resolution. Bobek suggests that individuals be provided with the necessary resources to assist in developing resilience: (a) meaningful adult relationships; (b) awareness of personal responsibility; (c) social and problem-solving skills; (d) competence, expectations and goals, self-assurance, a sense of humor; (e) and a sense of achievement. Bobek maintains that teacher resiliency is a fundamental component in teacher retention. New teachers may enhance their resilience by fostering productive relationships with people who understand the trials and tribulations of teaching, and can offer insight on options available for dealing with various situations, such as professional mentors.

Conceptual Framework: Phenomenography

Phenomenography is a qualitative research framework which focuses on understanding perceptions of reality rather than understanding reality itself (Marton, 1981). The goal of phenomenography is to identify, describe, or make statements and assertions about participants' ideas and experiences (Marton, 1981). Although similar to phenomenology in its focus on lived experiences, phenomenography differs in its emphasis on collective rather than individual meanings of experiences (Barnard, McCosker, & Gerber, 1999). Collective experiences are described using categories which are not specified nor derived from preconceived ideas (Marton, 1981). When analyzing experiences of a certain group of participants, researchers using phenomenography specify categories that emerge from the data and may also calculate how many participants share these experiences (Marton, 1981). A phenomenographic data analysis sorts perceptions which emerge from the data collected into specific categories of description.

The set of these categories is sometimes referred to as an outcome space. These categories (and the underlying structure) become the phenomenographic essence of the phenomenon. They are the primary outcomes and are the most important result of phenomenographic research. Phenomenographic categories are logically related to one another, typically by way of hierarchically inclusive relationships. The process of phenomenographic analysis is strongly iterative and comparative. It involves continual sorting and resorting of data and ongoing comparisons between the data and the developing categories of description, as well as between the categories themselves (Akerlind, 2005).

Definition of Terms

Throughout the research focused on teacher attrition there are several terms that are identified within the various studies. *Individual Resilience Theory* identifies character traits in teachers that impact perseverance of teaching in an urban school. Traits include: coherence, ability to thrive, hardiness, resourcefulness, self-efficacy, locus of control, potency, stamina, and personal causation (American Psychological Association, 2014). *Teacher Turnover* is the departure of teachers from their teaching jobs (Ingersoll, 2001). *Attrition* refers to the phenomenon of teachers leaving the profession (Ingersoll, 2001). *Migration* describes the transfer of teachers from one school to another (Ingersoll, 2001). *Irreplaceables* are effective teachers in urban schools that are extremely difficult to replace when transferring schools or leaving the profession.

Literature (Comprehensive) Related to the Topic

Recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers has been a national challenge, specifically in high minority, low-income schools (Ingersoll, 2001). With the current priority on academic standards and accountability, researchers have sought ways to classify causes that contribute to the school system's effectiveness. The increasing numbers of diverse students, along with disturbing teacher attrition rates, have raised worries regarding the staffing of classrooms with proficient, qualified educators, especially given the correlations, although modest, between teacher qualifications and student's academic success (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Many teachers who have abandoned the profession are highly capable and competent individuals; thus, the question is how to retain these teachers.

To gain awareness into these concerns, researchers have concentrated their attention on identifying factors that contribute to teacher shortages, retention, and attrition (Tye & O'Brien, 2002). Research suggests that teacher attrition is the single primary factor contributing to high rates of teacher shortages, especially in mathematics, science, and special education (Brown & Wynn, 2007). Based on the intensification of public examination of our nation's school system, an inquiry into factors affecting teacher attrition is necessary and reasonable. In fact, some researchers have labeled teacher attrition as "a significant factor undermining program stability and quality" (Boe, Bobbitt, & Cook, 1997). If society pursues to enhance school systems, they must begin by inspecting the issues that impact educators, as student outcomes are directly linked to teacher retention (Kersaint, Lewis, Potter, & Meisels, 2007).

Despite the United States population being relatively diverse, the teaching force has remained predominantly White non-Hispanic. This continues even though minority teachers demonstrate a lower retention rate than White teachers (Ingersoll, 2001); however, this

movement does appear to be fluctuating as the attrition rate for minority teachers is increasing (Ingersoll & May, 2011). Nevertheless, it is important to recognize how teacher and school variables effect teacher attrition (Kirby et al., 1999). Moreover, higher rates of teacher attrition are associated with additional financial costs and concerns related to school stability and teacher trust (Guin, 2004).

Personal financial issues resulting from meager teaching salaries also impacts the rates of teacher shortages and retention. Teacher salaries have been diminishing since the 1990s. Teachers are obtaining about twenty percent less than other college graduates who are equivalently educated. Even after adjusting for the discrepancies in the calendar year, in 30 states a teacher who has a family of four is eligible for several sources of government assistance, including free or reduced-price lunch for their own children in school (Podolsky, Klnl, Bishop, & Darling-Hammond, 2016).

Negative Impact of Teacher Attrition

Research on the effects of teacher quality has generally been focused on student achievement that was generally measured by standardized test scores. William Sanders (1998), through his research with Tennessee Value-Added Assessment identified that teacher effectiveness is the sole determinant that influenced gains in student achievement. Research focused on teacher quality has identified that underprivileged students, low-achieving students, and students of color are far more probable than other students to have teachers who are lacking in skill, non-certified, ill-educated, and under-performing. A high rate of teacher attrition is one of the major factors that teacher capacity is lower for poor, low-performing, and minority students.

Guin (2004) stated that although the effects teachers have on students are well documented, the system wide impact of high rates of teacher turnover—such as on the health of the school (including faculty, staff, students, and the larger community)—is often overlooked. Chronic teacher and staff turnover can negatively affect professional development, class size, scheduling, curriculum planning, collegiality, and a variety of other factors, adding a significant degree of chaos and complexity to school wide operations and potentially harming student learning across classrooms and teachers.

Negative effects of increased teacher attrition include the following: reduction in planning time, professional development that is often repetitious, as well as deficits in teacher experience. Teachers often suffer a loss of personal planning time as a result of teacher attrition due to focusing on supporting newer colleagues in their field. Also, professional development is often monotonous due to the effects of novice teachers constantly entering the school as a result of teacher attrition. Individualized professional development opportunities are limited due to the overwhelming needs of apprentice teachers. Experience matters in the teaching field; however more is not always better. The effect of experience is substantial during the first few years of teaching. Numerous research studies affirm findings from current research that novice teachers are less effective than those with some knowledge of teaching in their repertoire (Clotfelter, Ladd, and Vigdor, 2007). Early-career experience has a clear benefit in teacher effectiveness, and the influence is more substantial than the effect of most other observable teacher-related variables including advanced degrees, teacher licensure tests scores, National Board certification at the elementary level, and class size (Ladd 2008).

Teacher turnover is also likely to have a significant fiscal impact as schools and districts must fund additional recruitment programs, implement interview and hiring procedures, and

provide additional professional development—not to mention the loss in experience and expertise (Guin, 2004). The National Commission on Teaching America’s Future (NCTAF) estimates the cost of teacher turnover across the country at \$7.3 billion annually, including the cost of recruiting, hiring, and training new teachers. Attrition costs vary somewhat between districts, with urban districts sustaining more budget damage than rural districts. High turnover schools incur significant costs associated with their constant recruitment, hiring, training and separation of teachers, and these costs are not being weighed against possible salary savings; high turnover creates a constant drain on funding that offsets savings on low salaries for beginning teachers.

Urban School Challenges

Experts agree that teacher retention is one of the greatest challenges facing urban school districts. In addition to the challenging conditions, the literature details various reasons why urban schools may have a difficult task in retaining teachers. Racial, political and economic divides (Weiner, 1993), insufficient preparation (Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 1999), job dissatisfaction (Ingersoll, 2001), and retirement compound the already taxing environment. Inner cities can be difficult places to live and teach, presenting unique factors compared to suburban and rural counterparts (Patterson, Collins & Abbott, 2004). These factors can often compromise the education of students and the teachers who teach them (Patterson, et al; 2004). The teacher who chooses an urban school must maintain an ideal of service despite unrelenting conditions that constantly, both directly and indirectly, sabotage them (Weiner, 1993). Until recently, few scholars have recognized that the problem in urban schools is not recruitment but retention (Salvador & Wilson, 2002). Fewer resources (Darling-Hammond, 2000), poorer working conditions and facilities, limited access to textbooks and supplies, fewer administrative supports,

and larger class sizes contribute to the challenges of teaching in an urban school (Harris, 2002). In addition, teachers are responsible for working with many students and families who have a wide range of needs (Darling-Hammond, 2000) with less parent involvement, lower student motivation and less than satisfactory academic skills (Bondy & McKenzie, 1999). These are just some of the factors making urban schools different and challenging environments in which to teach.

Lack of Cultural Responsiveness

The foundation of culturally responsive pedagogy identifies that culture is essential to learning and crucial in communicating and receiving information but also in framing the thinking process of groups and individuals. A culturally responsive pedagogy that recognizes, responds to, and honors knowledge, information, and processes as culturally bound offers adequate and more equitable access to education for culturally and linguistically diverse student groups.

Many novice teachers have not been exposed to culturally responsive pedagogy or curriculum design that involves connections to students' cultures (Gay, 2000). Teacher education curricula across the United States often include courses about cultural diversity intended to promote a just and equitable education for all. However, despite emphasis on diversity, teacher education programs can offer fragmented and superficial treatments of diversity (Mills, 2008). Although there has been a strong emphasis on multicultural education, culturally relevant pedagogy and culturally responsive pedagogy, helping teachers become culturally responsive continues to challenge teacher educators today (Ladson-Billings, 2011). Educating culturally diverse students has become one of the vital issues in education. It has been indicated that teachers' knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes are highly correlated with students' races, ethnicities, and the qualities of education that they receive. Therefore, implementing culturally responsive

teaching does not only improve academic achievement of diverse students, but also benefits all students. If teachers can understand student's backgrounds and teach in a culturally responsive way, several critical educational problems might be alleviated, such as low academic achievement and the disproportionate representation in special education (Gay, 2000).

Insufficient Teacher Preparation

Research consistently reveals that teachers often leave high-poverty, low-performing, at-risk schools because they have not been adequately prepared to teach in such demanding environments and lack much needed assistance from administrators (Laine, 2008). It has been acknowledged for many years that teacher preparation for high-need urban schools is an obstacle that requires a modification of teacher preparation program structures and content. Improvement strategies for teacher preparation include an increase fieldwork in urban schools, coursework that focuses on comparative culture and human relations, psychology, and the history of the civil rights movement. Acknowledging that academic course work alone, is perhaps inadequate in preparing teachers of diverse students. Regardless of the advancement in urban teacher preparation in recent years, concerns persist about restructuring programs and practices in order to affect teachers' abilities to work with culturally diverse communities. These concerns include time in course curricula for discourse and reflection on field-based work, sufficient guidance in fieldwork sites, and maintaining communication amongst universities and field sites.

Additionally, multicultural service learning and community-based learning have had varied results as some teacher education participants' negative assumptions about urban children and communities emerge as uncompromising, and program experiences within an urban school have supported rather than transformed those attitudes. One plausible explanation of insufficient teacher preparation is that it is nearly impossible for a professional school of education to teach

its graduates everything they need to know before taking a job. Some things can only be learned on the job within a classroom.

Poverty

Poverty is one of the most pervasive problems affecting public schools and is rarely discussed as an education issue at all (Birdsong, 2016). The National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP, 2017) stated that about 15 million children in the United States (21% of all children) live in families with incomes below the federal poverty threshold, a measurement that has been shown to underestimate the needs of families. The NCCP continued by arguing that on average, families require an income double the amount in order to cover basic expenses. Low income families are defined as the family income being less than twice the federal poverty threshold. According to NCCP Demographics Data Generator, Tennessee has 50% of children under the age of 18 identified as low-income, compared to a national average of 43%

Most of these children have parents who work, but low wages and unstable employment leave their families struggling to make ends meet. Poverty can impede children's ability to learn and contribute to social, emotional, and behavioral problems. Poverty also can contribute to poor physical and mental health. Risks are greatest for children who experience poverty when they are young and/or experience deep and persistent poverty.

Students who are born into poverty are disadvantaged even before birth (Birdsong, 2016). A child's cognitive capacity is not a matter of genetics; however, it can be strongly influenced by external factors such as lack of prenatal care, drug use, environmental toxins, poor nutrition, and exposure to stress and violence. These external factors can have a negative effect on a child from the prenatal stage through adulthood.

Another negative affect of poverty focuses on verbal exposure and a student's vocabulary. Hart and Risley (1995) demonstrated that students that lived in poverty hear 32 million fewer spoken words than peers who were born into middle class families. Sparks (2015) explained that it is more than a word gap. Children of professionals heard twice as many unique vocabulary words, and twice as many encouraging versus discouraging conversations. The conversational interactions from professional families promoted 85% of the vocabulary, conversational patterns, and language complexity of the three-year-olds. As a result, children of professionals had vocabularies more than twice as large as peers in families receiving welfare.

Children growing up in poverty often experience life as a series of volatile situations over which neither they nor their caregivers have any control. Thus they fail to develop a conception of themselves as free individuals capable of making choices and acting on them to shape their lives, instead reacting to crises that are only magnified by their poor ability to plan ahead or reflect (Birdsong, 2016).

Due to a more demanding work environment, it is difficult to move out of the poverty cycle. In the past, there has been an availability of well-paid unskilled jobs that allowed families to enter middle class. However, in today's knowledge-based economy, moving out of poverty is far more complex. With more competition for unskilled work and a minimum wage that has not kept up with inflation, attaining economic independence requires more education, planning, and interpersonal skills – precisely the areas in which low-income individuals are disadvantaged to begin with (Birdsong, 2016).

Student Violence and Behaviors

Students in urban schools enter the classroom with diverse academic and behavioral needs. School readiness studies of children who grow up in urban areas show that exposure to several critical risk factors related to early health and caretaking, including birth to a single parent, birth to a teenage mother, low birth weight, child maltreatment, and exposure to lead all significantly and negatively impact school adjustment (Weiss & Fantuzzo, 2001).

According to *Primary Sources: America's Teachers on the Teaching Profession* (2012), behavior issues that interfere with teaching and learning have notably worsened, according to an astonishing 62 percent of teachers who have been teaching in the same school for five or more years. The report indicated that the increased level of behavior problems has been seen across grade levels: 68 percent of elementary teachers, 64 percent of middle school teachers, and 53 percent of high school teachers. The problem affects the whole classroom. Behavior problems distract other students from learning and require teachers to spend precious instruction time on discipline and behavior management. Over half of teachers wish they could spend fewer school day minutes on discipline. Teachers who worked in low-income schools reported concerns about behavioral issues at a higher rate (65%), and teachers who worked in high-income areas were not far behind. In high-income areas, 56 percent of teachers reported more behavioral issues that interfere with teaching and learning.

Violence in schools typically manifests itself in one of four ways: physically, emotionally, sexually, or as destruction or theft of property. The behaviors that fall within these categories range from name-calling and sexual taunts to fighting and carrying weapons onto school property.

Students that grow up in poverty often have a low executive function (Birdsong, 2016). Executive function skills such as impulse control, emotional regulation, attention management, prioritization of tasks, and working memory draw on a limited supply of mental energy. But the day-to-day insecurities of life in poverty interfere with these functions by releasing stress hormones that direct energy away from them towards more basic survival mechanisms. Regular exposure to these stresses in childhood can inhibit early development of the neural connections that enable executive function, leaving children with both academic and behavioral problems.

Lack of Family Structure and Stability

A supportive and stable home environment plays a defining role in how motivated students are to learn. Certainly, not all urban children come from abusive or dysfunctional families. In fact, the National Center for Education Statistics (Lippman, Burns, & McArthur, 1996) reported that urban students were equally or more likely than other students to have families with certain characteristics that have been found to support desirable education outcomes, including high parental educational attainment, high expectations for their children's education, and frequent communication about school. This same study, however, found that many urban children were less likely to have other fundamental supports, including the family structure, economic security, and stability that are most associated with desirable educational outcomes.

Often, school officials view parents or other adults in the home as an impediment to students' motivation and achievement, perceiving them as adversaries instead of supporters of their children's education. These officials blame different cultural values and a lack of family structure for poor academic achievement. Parents, not surprisingly, frequently see school

officials as the problem, accusing them of discrimination and insensitivity (Atkinson & Juntunen, 1994).

Poor Working Conditions

Working conditions for educators in high-poverty schools play a major role in staff attrition. A report by Education Northwest (2014) identified that teachers in urban schools were typically underprepared and not supported as they confront lower levels of resources, poorer working conditions, and the stresses of working with students and families who have a wide range of needs. Beginning teachers are particularly vulnerable because they are more likely to be assigned low-performing students. Despite the added challenges that come with teaching students with higher needs, most beginners are given no professional support, feedback, or demonstration of what it takes to help their students succeed. The result is that new teachers are the most at risk of leaving the teaching profession.

School culture plays a role in retention. A school climate that is defined by high expectations for student learning—and where educators believe all students can learn—increases the probability that teachers will stay in their school. When teachers cite their many reasons for leaving their job in an urban school, most involved non-salary related dissatisfaction. Teachers most frequently cited excessive workloads and high stakes testing, disruptive student behavior, poor leadership and administration within schools, and views of teaching as a temporary profession. Most strategies identified in the research as cost effective and influential in convincing teachers to remain relate to improving teachers' work environment and providing professional development. While money awarded to teach in high-priority schools is an incentive, both novice and experienced teachers are attracted primarily to principals who are good instructional leaders, to like-minded colleagues who are committed to the same goals, to

working conditions and readily available, relevant instructional materials, and to professional learning supports that enable them to be effective (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

District budget reductions often result in insufficient working conditions for teachers. Numerous states that decreased their budgets due to the most recent recession have not restored their spending to the pre-recession level. As a result of lack of restored spending, general materials such as books, supplies, and computers are in short supply. Student to teacher ratios have also increased due to budget constraints. As schools contain higher percentages of students in poverty, as well as an increase in the homeless population, highly impacted school communities have more responsibilities to meet the needs of students with limited financial abilities.

Student Achievement

Student achievement is a vital measurement to determine school success. Parents, communities, and school officials alike translate student achievement test scores as a reflection of whether students, as well as the educational system, are performing adequately.

Urban schools experience unparalleled physical and demographic characteristics that differentiate them from suburban and rural school districts. Unlike suburban and rural school districts, urban school districts serve students in densely populated areas that contain significantly more students. In comparison to suburban and rural districts, urban school districts are frequently identified by higher concentrations of poverty, greater racial and ethnic diversity, larger concentrations of immigrant students and linguistic diversity, and more frequent rates of student transiency (Kincheloe, 2010). The concentration of poverty in a school has a critical

relationship to achievement—as the proportion of poor students in a school increases, student achievement decreases.

Urban schools are inundated with numerous instructional initiatives and approaches that can often become dismantled, or indeed contradict one another. Additionally, the professional development used to introduce these initiatives and strengthen teachers' continued learning is too frequently unsuccessful.

Provided the diversity of student populations' demands, urban school districts call for a variety of initiatives, but these should target explicit and identified needs that are coordinated within a broader vision of student achievement and academic standards. Furthermore, urban school initiatives should be carefully selected, with attention paid to what is already being implemented successfully within the school district. Urban school initiatives should employ expertise within the schools for coaching and program building so that institutional learning can transfer on to novice teachers who have the greatest need for professional learning assistance (Ahram, Stenbridge, Fergus, & Noguera, 2011).

Inexperienced Teaching Staff

Aside from the school environment, teachers are perhaps the most apparent school resource. Extensive research has confirmed that educators have a significant impact on student achievement (Goldhaber, 2007) with a key indicator of teacher experience being related to student performance. Students in schools with high concentrations of low-income Black and Latino students are more susceptible to inexperienced or unqualified teachers, fewer challenging college preparatory courses, more remedial courses, and a higher percentage of teacher turnover.

Research indicated that teachers become more effective the longer they teach. In his review of teacher research, Goldhaber (2007) featured studies that regularly demonstrate teachers becoming increasingly more effective in the first three to five years of teaching. Thus, it can be implied that teachers with fewer than three years of teaching experience are less effective than those with three or more years of teaching experience.

Experienced teachers, however, are not equally dispersed across low- and high-poverty schools. Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, and Wyckoff (2005) determined that teachers are interested in schools with low concentrations of poverty, low minority populations, and high levels of student achievement, hence shaping the issue of teacher quality as one connected to professional flexibility. Teachers who perform at higher levels on the teacher certification exam are significantly more likely to leave schools having the lowest achieving students, leading to high teacher turnover rates in lower performing schools. This high turnover rate makes it more difficult for low-performing schools to create an experienced teaching staff, thus creating an inequitable distribution of experienced teachers.

Low Expectations of Students

Urban schools often are unsuccessful in providing environments of high academic expectations due to consistent cultural challenges that either generate or perpetuate low expectations of students. Teachers in urban school districts often experience an overwhelming feeling based upon the high needs of their students, and as a result depreciate their own expectations for student performance (Ahram et al., 2011).

Structurally, this is identified in the deficiency of demanding and high-level courses and programs such as advanced placement courses and gifted and talented programs. Research has

shown that given the circumstance and appropriate encouragement, students will perform to the high expectations set forth for them (Ahram et al., 2011).

The students should experience, recognize, and understand the structures and culture of the school as requiring their best effort and expecting excellence of them. Urban school districts need to provide access to rigorous courses and increase academic support to struggling students. Furthermore, urban schools must engage students in early intervention systems to identify and support struggling students, which are a critical components of school effectiveness (Ahram et al., 2011).

School Leadership

Principal leadership plays a significant role in teacher turnover. Teachers identify the quality of administrative support as a key factor in decisions to leave a school. In addition, teachers point to the importance of school culture and collegial relationships, time for collaboration, and decision-making input-also areas in which the principal plays a central role. Principals tend to be weaker in high-poverty, low-achieving schools, where principal quality can have an even greater bearing on teacher attrition (Grissom, 2011).

Principal leadership and support are among the most important factors in teachers' decisions about whether to stay in a school or in the profession. Studies across the nation have found that the quality of leadership can have a large effect on teacher turnover. In fact, teachers often identify the quality of administrative support as more important to their decision than salaries. One recent study found that improvements in school leadership were strongly related to reductions in teacher turnover (Kraft, Marinell, & Shen-Wei Yee, 2016). Recent data revealed teacher turnover rates reaching nearly 25% among teachers who strongly disagree that their

administrator encourages and acknowledges staff, communicates a clear vision, and generally runs a school well. That is more than double the attrition rate of teachers who feel their administrators are supportive (Darling-Hammond & Carver-Thomas, 2016).

Research identified at least two major components of school leadership that contribute to teachers' decisions about whether and where to stay in the profession. These include administrator support and leadership style (Darling-Hammond & Carver-Thomas, 2016).

Administrative Support: Teachers are more likely to remain in the classroom when they feel supported by administrators. In fact, research suggested that principal support can matter more than even teacher workload when it comes to decisions to stay at or leave a school. This support can take many forms, including providing emotional and instructional support. School leaders who support teachers with instructional resources, teaching materials, and professional learning opportunities have also been associated with lower teacher attrition rates. Principals at schools with reduced teacher turnover also ensure that teachers have the necessary communication channels and sensible budgets to address the learning needs of all their students.

Leadership Style: Studies have also found that a principal's leadership style was associated with teachers' decisions to leave the school or profession. For example, principals who do not "view themselves as traditional, omnipotent, 'top-down' administrators" have been associated with low teacher attrition rates. Instead, these principals generally described their leadership responsibilities as facilitators, collaborators, team leaders, or leaders of leaders. To foster collaboration and create a broader sense of ownership, these principals often employ leadership teams, interview teams, or site-based management teams to make school-based decisions (Brown & Wynn, 2007).

Principals tend to be weaker in high-poverty, low-achieving schools, where teachers often rate their principals as less effective (Learning Policy Institute, 2017). Similarly, in the quartile of schools with the most students of color, teachers are almost twice as likely to report severe dissatisfaction with their site leaders compared to teachers in schools with the fewest students of color. Not surprisingly, then, principal quality influences teacher attrition even more in schools with large proportions of low-income and minority students. Multiple studies of teacher attrition in high-poverty schools have found that teachers' perceptions of their school's leader is a dominant factor in their decision to remain in the school. This relationship—which includes such factors as setting clear expectations, providing support and encouragement, and recognizing staff for a job well done—is much larger in high-need schools, and, for the most effective principals, can even close the teacher turnover gap with schools serving more advantaged students.

A synthesis of six studies analyzing teacher turnover in high-poverty schools found that effective school leaders were:

- effective school managers (ensuring that teachers have the necessary resources, communication channels, and sensible budgets);
- effective instructional leaders (strategically hiring teachers and staff, providing regular and fair teacher evaluations, and helping their teachers to continually improve); and
- inclusive decision makers that listen to teachers' ideas and engage them in change and provide teacher autonomy within their classroom as appropriate (Simon & Johnson, 2015).

Retention of Effective Teachers

As school leaders work to address the issue of teacher retention, it is important to remember that the goal is not to achieve zero turnover. Teachers will continue to retire or leave for personal reasons that cannot be controlled by the district. Some beginning teachers may also find that they are not well suited to teaching – they and their districts may be better off if they leave teaching early. The goal is to ensure that teacher turnover is a managed process and not a random series of events. Each school district needs a comprehensive human resource plan in place that enables school leaders to achieve the maximum return on their investments in teachers.

Excessive turnover can disrupt any workplace, and a recent study showed that very low teacher retention rates can negatively affect student achievement. To improve schools—especially struggling schools—education leaders need to ask a more complicated question than simply whether teacher retention rates are high. They need to ask whether schools are keeping more of their best teachers than their worst. The nation’s urban school districts are losing their most and least successful teachers at strikingly similar rates (The New Teacher Project, 2012).

Irreplaceables

The New Teacher Project (2012) identified various causes that negatively impacted retention of effective teachers who are deemed “Irreplaceables.” Irreplaceable teachers believe that administration does not try particularly hard to retain their most effective teachers, nor do they make a special effort to counsel out or dismiss low-performing teachers—even though those teachers rarely improve. Instead, they seem content to retain whichever teachers are willing to stay and lose whichever teachers decide to leave, regardless of skill (TNTP, 2012). Teachers also identify poor school cultures and working conditions drive away great teachers. Culture and

working conditions are especially large problems at struggling schools. Teachers at low-achieving schools are much less satisfied with working conditions than their colleagues at high-achieving schools (TNTP, 2012).

Irreplaceable teachers have unique qualities that separate them from their colleagues. Irreplaceables are slightly more likely to believe that effective teachers can help students overcome out-of-school challenges and are more likely to understand their own effectiveness. In teaching, as in any other profession, some people are more successful at their jobs than others. Diligence and good intentions are poor predictors of good teaching (TNTP, 2012). Irreplaceables have the capacity to successfully manage obstacles in the road before us while maintaining a straight and true path towards life's goals (Brooks & Goldstein, 2003). Resiliency equals "a unique, powerful combination of tenacity (willingness to keep trying in the face of setbacks), optimism (belief in the probability of success), and impact (commitment to standards)" (Bernshausen and Cunningham, 2001). Simply put, resilience means achieving positive life outcomes despite risk (Werner, 1993). Central to the concept and development of resiliency are protective factors. Protective factors are "characteristics within the person or environment that mitigate the negative impact of stressful situations or conditions" (Henderson, 2003) such as those prevalent in urban school systems. Henderson (2003) identified six protective factors that develop resiliency in teachers: (a) purpose and expectations, (b) nurture and support, (c) positive connections, (d) meaningful participation, (e) life guiding skills, and (f) clear and consistent boundaries. Bobek (2002) stated that challenging conditions related to the teaching profession require that teachers be resilient. Furthermore, Bobek stated that when teachers are resilient, they are better able to assess adverse situations and determine options for coping, in addition to implementing the appropriate solutions. Bobek recommended that individuals be provided with

the necessary resources to develop resilience: (a) significant adult relationships; (b) a sense of personal responsibility; (c) social and problem-solving skills; (d) a sense of competence, expectations and goals, confidence, a sense of humor; (e) and a sense of accomplishment. Bobek maintains that teacher resiliency is a critical element in teacher retention. New teachers may enhance their resilience by fostering productive relationships with people who understand the trials and tribulations of teaching and can offer insight on options available for dealing with various situations.

Current Strategies for Decreasing Teacher Attrition in Urban Schools

Measure Teacher Turnover and Its Costs

Education leaders need clear, current, accurate data on teacher turnover and its costs, in formats that make it possible to analyze, manage, and control those costs. The data collected provides valuable information to district leaders in the form of which teachers were leaving the district, from which schools, and how much money was leaving each time a teacher left. This data provided a better handle on teacher attrition, in order to develop a comprehensive and coherent human resource strategy to reduce teacher turnover.

Clark County Schools in Las Vegas, Nevada implemented this approach of monitoring teacher attrition data and that specific schools within the district had a higher teacher dropout rate than students; therefore, resulting in low achievement scores and an inadequate learning environment. In order to improve teacher retention at the struggling schools, the schools were provided a two-month lead in hiring teachers compared to other schools within the district. The administrators of the schools were able to select teachers that aligned with the needs of their school improvement plans. Due to the early advantage of hiring teachers, the schools also had

the opportunity to implement a summer institute to prepare newly hired teachers. As a result of this comprehensive focus on teacher attrition and recruitment, Clark County Schools sustained a retention rate of 85% to 95% in the pilot schools that implemented this program (NCTAF, 2007).

Comprehensive Induction Programs

The culture of today's schools continues to reinforce the practice of solo teaching in self-contained classrooms. This mindset is compounded by a belief that new teachers are interchangeable units who can easily be replaced by the next cohort of beginners (NCTAF, 2007). As a result, good teachers have little opportunity and few incentives to share their expertise with their colleagues, and beginning teachers are left to fend for themselves without the collegial mentoring and coaching support they need to succeed. The first step toward breaking this mindset is to recognize the importance of hiring and developing well-prepared teachers. Well-prepared teachers possess strong content knowledge; they understand how students learn and demonstrate the teaching skills necessary to help all students meet high standards; they can use a variety of assessment strategies to diagnose student learning needs; and they can reflect on their practices to improve instruction in collaboration with their colleagues. Whether through traditional or alternative preparation, teachers need to acquire the knowledge and skills to be effective. It is not how new teachers are prepared but how well they are prepared and supported in whatever preparation pathway they choose (NCTAF, 2003).

Once good teachers have been hired it is essential to give them a strong start with the support they need to succeed. A recent national study of support for new teachers found that comprehensive approaches to teacher induction can reduce teacher turnover by more than 50 percent (Ingersoll, 2004).

Because comprehensive induction programs reduce teacher turnover and increase teacher effectiveness, they have been found to be very cost effective. Comprehensive induction programs are based on four defining principles: (1) building and deepening teacher knowledge; (2) integrating new practitioners into a teaching community and school culture that support the continuous professional growth of all teachers; (3) supporting the constant development of the teaching community in the school; and (4) encouraging a professional dialogue that articulates the goals, values, and best practices of a community (NCTAF, 2003). Comprehensive induction programs provide a package of support systems for a new teacher that includes: (1) a mentor; (2) supportive communication from the principal, other administrators, and department chairs; (3) common planning or collaboration time with other teachers in the field; (4) reduced preparations (course load) and help from a teacher's aide; and (5) participation in an external network of teachers.

Quality induction programs provide the solid foundation that novice teachers need as they enter a profession with increasing complexity and new challenges. At their best, these comprehensive programs induct new teachers into a learning community focused on improving student learning (Ingersoll & May, 2011).

Mentoring

Given the increasing challenges faced by high-poverty urban schools, mentoring has become the panacea for policy makers interested in a quick-fix solution to the teacher quality dilemma (Hoppey, Jacobs, & Dana, 2009). Typically, the teachers working in urban schools in which the minority enrollment is greater than fifty percent (50%) tend to leave at rates more than twice those of teachers in schools with fewer minorities (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2002). Additionally, teachers with the least amount of teaching experience are

most often found in high-poverty schools (Carey, 2004) and often begin teaching in high-poverty schools brings special challenges, many which are difficult for an experienced teacher to handle (Hoppey, Jacobs, & Dana, 2009). Novice teachers in urban schools often lack certification, are teaching out of area, or have not been effectively prepared in their teacher education program for teaching urban students. The mentoring of new inductees is one way to address the recruitment and retention needs of new teachers in urban schools (Wang & Odell, 2002). Mentorship has increasingly become a worldwide teacher education strategy to address inadequate teacher preparation, increase teacher retention, and enhance student performance. Hoppey et al. (2009) states that the focus of a mentor program should:

- (1) build on previous preparation, knowledge, skills, and experience in order to increase instructional competence; and
- (2) to provide instructional and interpersonal support that encourages new educators to analyze and reflect upon their teaching, and to build a foundation for the continued study of teaching.

Other research suggested that new teachers appear to benefit from comprehensive induction support, in that the more intensive the program, the less likely they will quit teaching (Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004). Evidence also suggested that student achievement in both reading and math was higher among teachers who received more hours of mentoring, lending credence to the assumption that more time with a mentor improves teaching skills (Fletcher & Strong, 2009).

Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices

Many novice teachers have not been exposed to culturally responsive pedagogy or curriculum design that involves connections to students' cultures (Gay, 2000). Teacher education

curricula across the United States often include courses about cultural diversity intended to promote a just and equitable education for all (Ebersole, Kanahele-Mossman, Kawakami, 2016). However, despite emphasis on diversity, teacher education programs can offer fragmented and superficial treatments of diversity (Mills, 2008). Although there has been a strong emphasis on multicultural education, culturally relevant pedagogy and culturally responsive pedagogy, helping teachers become culturally responsive continues to challenge teacher educators today (Ladson-Billings, 2011). Educating culturally diverse students has become one of the vital issues in education. It has been indicated that teachers' knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes are highly correlated with students' races, ethnicities, and the qualities of education that they receive. Therefore, implementing culturally responsive teaching does not only improve academic achievement of diverse students, but also benefits all students. If teachers can understand student backgrounds and teach in a culturally responsive way, several critical educational problems might be alleviated, such as low academic achievement and the disproportionate representation in special education (Gay, 2000).

Mentoring Program Coupled with Culturally Responsive Teaching Strategies

Understanding how to provide quality mentoring for new teachers in inner-city schools remains essential and under examined in the empirical literature (Hoppey, Jacobs, & Dana, 2009). The issue is that there is no universal definition of mentoring and that mentoring is a contested practice in which different concepts, such as mentoring, supervision, coaching, etc., are used (Aspfors & Fransson, 2015). An alarming number of teachers are leaving the teaching profession within the first three years after graduation from a pre-service program. It is essential that education systems identify the challenges of novice teachers and provide supports to assist them.

Many scholars have emphasized the need of cultivating preservice teachers to acquire culturally responsive teaching competencies in teacher preparation programs (Gay, 2000). School districts should provide a mentor program for novice teachers that includes: (a) communicating with diverse learners, (b) knowing subject and students, (c) reflective teaching, (d) identifying resources, (e) creating a supportive context, (f) developing interpersonal relationships, and (g) promoting learner performance. The objective of the program would enable novice teachers to thrive rather than just survive in the profession of education. This includes encouraging teacher motivation and commitment as teachers meet the challenges encountered in their work as an educator in an urban school setting. Participants in the mentor program would be provided with interactions with mentor teachers, university faculty, administration, parents and the community. Research has found that both preservice and beginning teachers benefit from a distributed mentoring model in which knowledge and skills are acquired from a variety of expert and peer sources (Leon, 2014). Distributed mentorship that utilizes expert teachers and peer mentors for beginning urban school teachers increases teacher retention. Expert mentoring furthermore builds teacher self-confidence, competence in the ability to teach, and the ability to engage with collegial networks that support teaching while peer mentoring helps beginning teachers overcome their sense of inexperience and isolation.

Create Learning Organizations within the School

The need to hire and support well-prepared teachers is clear. But to sustain the growth of those teachers over time, educators should be inducted into a genuine learning organization. In such an organization, the expectation is that all members of the school's community share responsibility for mutual continued growth and success, as well as for the success of all students in the school. Transforming a school into a genuine learning organization calls for the creation of

a school culture in which novice and experienced teachers work together to improve student achievement. This vision represents a major change from standard practice in most American schools today, which are organized around stand-alone teaching in self-contained classrooms. School transformation requires leaders committed to changing the culture of schooling to support regular, sustained collaboration among teachers, principals, and students.

Schools that have become genuine learning organizations seek to guide and facilitate the learning paths of novice teachers as they become rooted in the professional culture of the school and in their academic discipline. Districts can help schools to become genuine learning organizations by providing embedded professional development, fostering collaboration around instructional improvement, and financially rewarding teachers for improving student achievement (Wiener & Pimentel, 2017).

Merit Pay

An analysis of existing research on teacher merit pay programs revealed that this highly debated practice is having a positive effect on student outcomes. Teacher merit pay, also known as incentive pay, performance pay and pay-for-performance offers financial incentives to teachers who meet certain criteria, usually involving improved student test scores (Brasher, 2017).

Numerous incentive programs have been evaluated and have provided mixed results. Not only is it possible that financial incentives do not affect teacher retention, but they may exacerbate turnover if the incentives are small or if teachers do not receive an incentive under these programs. Taken together, National Center on Performance Incentives (NCPI) researchers

find little evidence that districts and schools experienced any systematic change in overall teacher retention (Strauss, 2012).

Research conducted by external evaluators of Denver's Professional Compensation System for Teachers suggested small gains in retention (between 2-4%). Interview data supported these findings: Although a few teachers indicated they considered financial incentives when making their career decisions, most said they did not consider the incentives to be important factors in such decisions. Rather, teachers indicated that other non-pecuniary factors, such as the principal and student characteristics, were more important considerations in their career decisions (Strauss, 2012). The available body of evaluation research on alternative teacher compensation programs does not consistently suggest financial incentives improve teacher retention. In some cases, incentives appear to be associated with small increases in retention; in other cases, incentives appear to be associated with decreased retention.

The majority of evaluations, however, either found financial incentives had no effect on teacher retention or did not include an examination of retention at all. Accordingly, there is little reason to *assume* the availability of financial incentives will *result* in improved teacher retention. If anything, the research to date suggested that other considerations, such as working conditions and leadership, are more important factors in teachers' decisions to stay, move, or leave the profession entirely.

Summary

Since the origin of education, teacher attrition has been an obstacle that many districts have tried to improve using various strategies. Research affirms that the schools who serve a

high percentage of students in poverty are at risk for high teacher attrition due to a variety of issues that impact teaching in urban schools.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This purpose of this study was to determine specific factors that impacted teachers' decision to leave an urban education environment. The data collected in this study were through the use of exit interviews provided by a school district in southeast Tennessee, interviews with Human Resources staff to determine trends over time, interviews with current urban elementary school principals, as well as interviews with effective educators that have left an urban school environment.

Description of Qualitative Research

The exit surveys provided by the Human Resources department in a southeast school district in Tennessee provided general information through the use of a questionnaire about the educator's decision to transfer to a different school or leave the teaching field. Interviews with urban school principals provided information regarding their beliefs and ideas as to why teacher retention in urban schools is a challenge, as well as retention strategies they have effectively utilized. Effective teachers that transferred to a different school setting (movers) or left the teaching profession (leavers), identified by various urban principals within the school district, were also interviewed in order to identify factors that impacted their decision for change.

Description of the Specific Research Approach

This study employs a qualitative approach that collects and works with non-numerical data that is utilized to interpret meaning from interviews and observations of a targeted population to investigate teacher attrition rates in urban elementary schools in a county located in southeast Tennessee. The specific qualitative approach utilized in this study is phenomenology. According to *Social Research Methods (2006)* phenomenology is considered a philosophical perspective in qualitative methodology. The phenomenological approach used in this study

emphasizes a focus on the respondents' subjective experiences and interpretations while working in an urban elementary school that resulted in their decision to abandon their position.

The researcher conducted interviews from a sampling of effective teachers that previously taught in an urban elementary school environment. The interviews served as the qualitative portion of the study due to revealing the perceptions of a small group of people in order to guide and support the construction of a hypothesis. Qualitative research aligned with this study by identifying synergy among respondents as they answered and commented about their rationale for leaving an urban school environment. Through interviews, the researcher also was provided the opportunity to probe the participants that resulted in the researcher being able to reach beyond initial responses and rationales.

A descriptive design approach was applied within this study to describe the status of the phenomenon being examined. Through the use of descriptive design, the researcher develops a hypothesis after the data has been collected. When investigating a new area of study, the descriptive method is widely utilized to identify the factors that exist and to identify relationships that exist among the factors (Shields & Rangarajan, 2013).

The researcher requested permission from a Central Office representative in order to obtain data from exit interview surveys from urban teachers that transferred to suburban or rural schools within the district, as well as teachers that left the district. Through the use of the descriptive design approach, the researcher examined characteristics of a population being studied. The data collected served the purpose of categorizing the elements of data identified through the use of exit surveys.

Description of the Study Participants and Setting

The setting for this qualitative study is a diverse school district located in southeast Tennessee. The school district consisted of 43 elementary schools that were identified as rural, suburban, urban, or magnet. Of these, 11 of the 43 elementary schools are considered urban schools based upon student ethnicity, school location, and free and reduced lunch percentages.

In order to select the participants, the researcher contacted six principals that served in urban elementary schools. An email was sent to the principals explaining that permission was granted by the Central Office, as well as an overview of my research question and study. The principals were asked to identify effective teachers that previously worked in their schools prior to making the decision to transfer or leave the teaching profession after teaching in an urban school setting. The researcher instructed the principals to select individuals that did not transfer due to outside factors (spouse job relocation, promotion, marriage, etc.) impacting their decision to leave.

Based upon the responses of the contacted administrators, the researcher selected a small group of participants to interview in order to determine trends in their experiences and rationale for leaving an urban school environment. Upon receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) the participants were notified and interview times and locations were established.

Data Collection Procedures and Data Analysis

In this study the methodology included interviews from a small group of educators that previously taught in an urban elementary schools that later transferred to another school or left the teaching profession. The participants were selected due to their level of effectiveness in the classroom, experiences in an urban school, and willingness to share their perspective and personal perception on the topic of teacher attrition. The selected participants represented a wide

range of experiences, as well as grade levels taught within the school.

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

The researcher utilized the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) approach, which explores how participants make sense of their personal and social world, as well as study the particular experiences and events hold for participants. The IPA approach involves detailed examination of the participant's life while attempting to explore personal experiences and is concerned with an individual's personal perception or account of an event itself (Smith & Osborn, 2007).

The researcher utilized a specified series of open-ended questions focused on teacher attrition in urban schools; however, follow-up questions were posed to the participants based upon their answers from previous questions in order to obtain a better account of their experiences. The purpose of the interview was to gather an authentic account of the educator's perception of factors that led to their departure.

Member Checks

The researcher utilized participants' feedback throughout the interview process in order to improve the accuracy, credibility, and validity of the study. The researcher completed member checks during the interview process by building rapport with the interviews in order to obtain honest and open responses to interview questions. During the interviews, the researcher often restated or summarized information collected and then questioned the participants to determine accuracy. Member checks were also completed after the study by sharing the findings based on the information collected with all involved participants.

Peer Debriefing

Throughout this study, the researcher worked with several colleagues that hold impartial

views of this study. The impartial peers examined the researcher's transcripts, final report, and general methodology in order to provide feedback to enhance the study's credibility and ensure validity.

Audit Trail

The researcher created an audit trail to record specifics of how the qualitative study was conducted. The audit trail consists of all field notes, tape recordings, and other records that were utilized within the study. The purpose of the audit trail is to have a clear description of the research path from the beginning of the study to the development and reporting of the findings.

Journaling

The researcher maintained a personal journal throughout the study in order to provide a data set of the researcher's reflections on the research study. The journal also served as a tool for refining ideas, beliefs, and personal responses to the research in progress.

Coding

After the collection of interviews, the researcher utilized open coding by reading through the data collected and creating tentative categories that emerged from the observations and interviews. The researcher recorded examples of participants' words and established properties of each code. After utilizing the open coding method, the researcher began to identify relationships among the open codes by completing axial coding. Through axial coding, the researcher was able to determine the connections amongst the open codes.

Exit Interviews

Electronic exit data from the school district was obtained for this study. This is the first year that such data has been collected by the school district; therefore, identifying trends has

proven difficult with the utilization of this initial data. The electronic exit interviews are required for individuals who have transferred to other schools, have been promoted within the district, or have left the district. The structure of the exit interview is composed of Likert scale responses, as well as open-ended questions where the individual may respond in written form and provide additional information. The researcher utilized the exit interview data to determine if the Likert scale responses correlated to the interview responses of teachers who transferred from urban schools.

Ethical Considerations

Voluntary participation and informed consent were provided to all participants within the study. These principles were followed to guarantee that all human subjects elected to participate of their own free will and that they were fully informed regarding the procedures of the research project and any potential risks. Ethical standards also protected the confidentiality and anonymity of the subjects. The standards for obtaining data were discreet and protected the identity of everyone involved during the research.

Limitations and Delimitations

Although participants within the study volunteered and identities remained confidential, a limitation of the study was the researcher's administrative role within the school district. The researcher's role could have limited the transparency or truthfulness to responses due to the researcher's work in urban schools within the district. The researcher asked the educators to present answers in an honest manner assuring their anonymity. This may have allowed for more sincerity when responding to the interviews.

When gathering data for this study, the researcher excluded any teacher attrition data that resulted from personnel matters, transfers to other states due to relocation purposes, as well as

educators who were dismissed from their assigned job due to performance issues. This ensured that the data collection process was aligned to the research question regarding factors that impact a teachers' decision to leave an urban school environment.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to determine the primary factors that impact teacher retention in urban elementary schools. In order to identify various factors that may impact teacher retention, this study utilized several forms of data to validate the information gathered through cross verification from other sources, as well as understand multiple perspectives to examine and interpret the data. These sources included teacher exit surveys provided by the school district, urban elementary school principal interviews, and interviews with teachers that transferred from an urban elementary school to a rural or suburban elementary school. The interviews consisted of open-ended, one-on-one semi-structured interviews with six elementary urban principals and six educators. The questions for the interviews originated from the district exit interview survey, in order to determine common categories or relationships amongst the sources, as well as illuminate discrepancies that may emerge within the study. The interview questions ranged from providing a background of experiences in education and identifying the rationale for teacher attrition in urban schools. The final question in the interview process: “What supports do you think teachers would need to stay in an urban elementary school? Why? The interviews averaged 20-30 minutes.

Selection of Participants

Six urban elementary school principals were selected to participate in the interview process focused on factors that impact teacher retention. The principals selected for this study have spent their entire professional careers in urban schools and are familiar with the issue of teacher attrition in urban schools. Table 4.1 presents pertinent demographic information about the administrator participants in the study. After participating in the interview, the administrators were asked to identify effective teachers that they previously worked with that chose to transfer

to a suburban or rural school after being an educator in an urban school. School administrators selected the sample educators to be utilized as participants for this study. Principals were asked to select effective teachers based upon criteria such as: evaluation scores, teacher effectiveness data, and their overall opinion of their performance techniques within the classroom. Table 4.2 identifies teacher demographic data information about effective teachers used in this study.

Table 4.1

Demographics of School Administrator Participants

Assigned Number	Years of Experience in Urban Education	Years as an Administrator in an Urban School
1	30+	25
2	21	8
3	30	20
4	14	5
5	16	7
6	30	10

Table 4.2

Demographics of Teacher Participants

Assigned Number	Years of Experience in Urban Education	Total Years Teaching
1	1	5
2	4	6
3	4.5	29
4	5	16
5	5	10
6	5	12

Research Question

The researcher examined administrators' and teachers' perspectives related to the following research question:

1. What are the primary factors that impact teacher retention in urban elementary schools?

Analysis of Data

The researcher utilized a four-question interview related to rationales for teacher attrition in urban schools. The questions were focused on answering the research question. For the interview, the researcher asked participants about their professional history to gain understanding of previous and current employment. The questions were designed to identify personal perspectives from administrators and teachers as to why teachers leave urban education environments. For administrators this question addresses their historical observations of high teacher attrition rates within the district. Through this question, the teachers identified personal reasons for transferring from urban schools. Another question prompted reflection from administrators and teachers in determining considerations for remaining in urban education. This question provided insight for next steps to identify possible solutions or improvements for teacher attrition.

Descriptive Design-Observational Method

The researcher utilized a descriptive design method focused on observing participants in their natural environments. Descriptive research is aimed at casting light on current issues or problems through a process of data collection that enables them to describe the situation more completely than was possible without employing this method (Fox & Bayat, 2007). When establishing the initial interviews of participants, the researcher suggested meeting at participants' home schools in order for the researcher to immerse herself in the setting where the

participants are, while taking notes and recording. Advantages of observation data collection method include direct access to research phenomena, high levels of flexibility in terms of application and generating a permanent record of phenomena to be referred to later.

Interview Questions for Administrators

1. Describe your employment background, specifically addressing your work in urban schools.
2. Why do you think effective teachers leave urban educational environments and transfer to suburban or rural educational environments?
3. What do you think effective teachers need to stay in an urban educational environment?
4. Can you provide any names of effective urban educators that have transferred to rural or suburban educational environments?

Administrators' Experiences in Urban Education

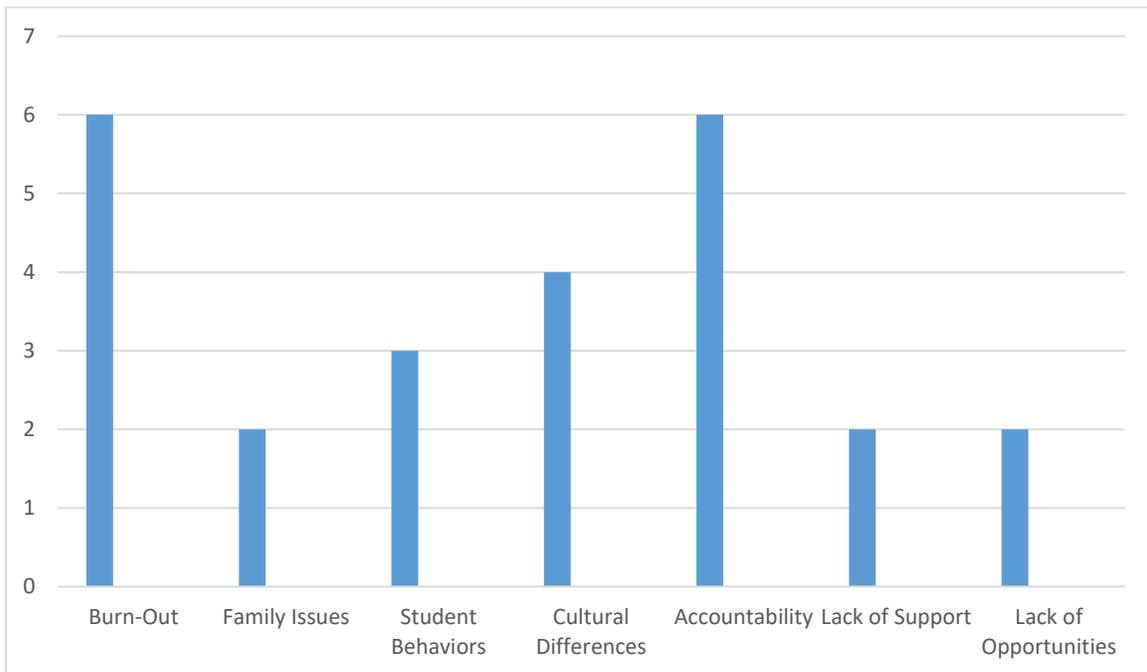
Administrator participants selected for this study have spent the entirety of their careers teaching and leading in urban educational environments that include elementary, middle, and high school settings. All administrator participants advanced from the role of teacher to assistant principal and are currently principals in urban schools. The participants all identified themselves as successful teachers in urban schools that were promoted due to their utilization of effective skills while working in demanding setting. When discussing their background working in urban educational environments, the participants acknowledged that teacher attrition in urban schools has been a problematic theme throughout their career in education. Four of the six participants described working in an urban environment as a calling from a higher source that required additional skill sets to be successful in such a challenging environment.

Administrators' Perceptions of Factors that Impact Teacher Attrition

Following the background of the participants' urban experiences, administrators were asked to reflect and identify factors that they believe impact effective teachers' attrition in urban educational environments.

Figure 4.3

Administrators-Factors that Negatively Impact Teacher Retention



Teacher Burnout. All six administrator participants identified teacher burnout as an issue that had negative effects on teacher retention in urban schools. Participant 2 summarized teacher burnout as “stress caused by high demand having an overall negative impact on an individual’s well-being.” Participant 1 stated that teaching in an urban environment over time wears down an individual physically and emotionally due to the numerous stressors in an urban school. Some of the stressors identified by participant 6 include: long hours of work, student behavior issues, and trying to meet the social and emotional needs of students. Participant 5 responded:

There are so many demands on urban teachers that are out of their control; however, they are expected to perform miracles. These demands often have an adverse effect on an individuals' family and home life. Compared to teachers in suburban and rural schools, their job has an extremely high stress level due to all of the demands placed on them by administrators and Central Office staff.

Participant 3 recalled that throughout her career she has observed effective teachers leave urban schools due to the negative impact stress has on their home environment.

Participant 3 continued by stating that it is hard to balance the life of an urban school teacher, while also being a mother and a wife due to the toll it takes on you emotionally.

Family Issues. Two out of six administrator participants mentioned that family issues cause some teachers to leave urban schools. Participant 4 suggested that some teachers have outside responsibilities with family that prevent them from being able to commit to the high need environment of urban schools. Participant 2 recalled that numerous teachers often leave when their children reach school age, since they want to teach at a school where their own children can attend. Participant 5 agreed stating that “many teachers do not want their own children to attend the urban school where they teach due to student behavior issues and test scores.”

Student Behaviors. Three out of six administrator participants acknowledged negative student behaviors as a reason for teacher attrition. Participant 1 described the issue of having a high percentage of new teachers in urban schools that are often unprepared for dealing with student discipline issues found in urban schools. Participant 3 stated:

Students in urban schools have numerous challenges that are correlated to social and emotional needs, and many new teachers do not know how to build relationships with students in order to gain an understanding of the many issues that face students in poverty.

Participant 4 agreed that teacher attrition is a cycle that negatively impacts students in urban schools due to students' lack of trust as a result of constantly having new teachers each year as a result of teacher attrition.

Cultural Differences. Four out of six administrator participants cited cultural differences as an issue that negatively impacts teacher retention. Participant 2 explained cultural differences as parents viewing education as non-important due to being in constant survival mode due to poverty. Teachers have a difficult time understanding why most parents in an urban environment do not seem to care about their child's education. Most teachers in urban schools were raised in middle class homes and do not understand the effects of living in poverty. Participant 1 acknowledged that teachers do not understand that the parents really do care about education; however, their focus is trying to provide the basic needs for their children.

Participant 3 explained that teachers are often distraught due to not seeing much change in the education system as a result of their hard work. This in part is due to the negative effects of generational poverty that cannot be controlled by the educational system. Participant 3 also stated that due to the effects of poverty, teachers feel as if they are unable to make a difference in the lives of students due to their circumstances.

Participant 5 acknowledged that there is a “personal battle that teachers feel as though they can never win.” She continued by stating that generational poverty is often a mindset in families that live in poverty, and it is difficult to combat the numerous issues that students encounter with education alone.

Accountability. High stakes accountability measures were identified as factors for teacher attrition by all interviewed administrative participants. Participant 4 explained that many teachers feel that they are valued merely by their test scores. Teachers feel extreme pressure to perform at a high level and that is very challenging due to factors that negatively impact student achievement. Participant 6 stated that “urban schools are hyper focused on improving student achievement; therefore, teachers have overwhelming demands placed on them by the district to improve test scores.” Participant 1 felt that teachers often had a mindset of defeat based upon low student achievement scores and that their hard work rarely materialized. Participant 2 agreed that urban educators in grades three through five have a lot of pressure placed on them in relation to student performance. This is a result of state accountability data and the ever-changing target of increasing student achievement. Participant 3 discussed how testing and accountability were extremely challenging in Tennessee due to the frequent changes in standards and achievement measures. She continued by indicating that the rigor has increased with standards and assessments; however, a majority of students in urban schools are below grade level due to outside factors.

Lack of Support. Two out of six administrator participants identified lack of support as a reason many effective teachers leave an urban school. Participant 6 indicated that “effective teachers rarely obtain instructional support due to their level of competency.”

She continued by acknowledging novice teachers receive the most support due to their diverse needs for assistance with classroom management, curriculum, as well as best practices for instruction.

Participant 4 agreed and commented that “effective teachers are learners and have the desire to grow and develop their craft of educating students.” However, new teachers often take precedent due to the range of needs that they have as a result of being new to teaching in an urban school.

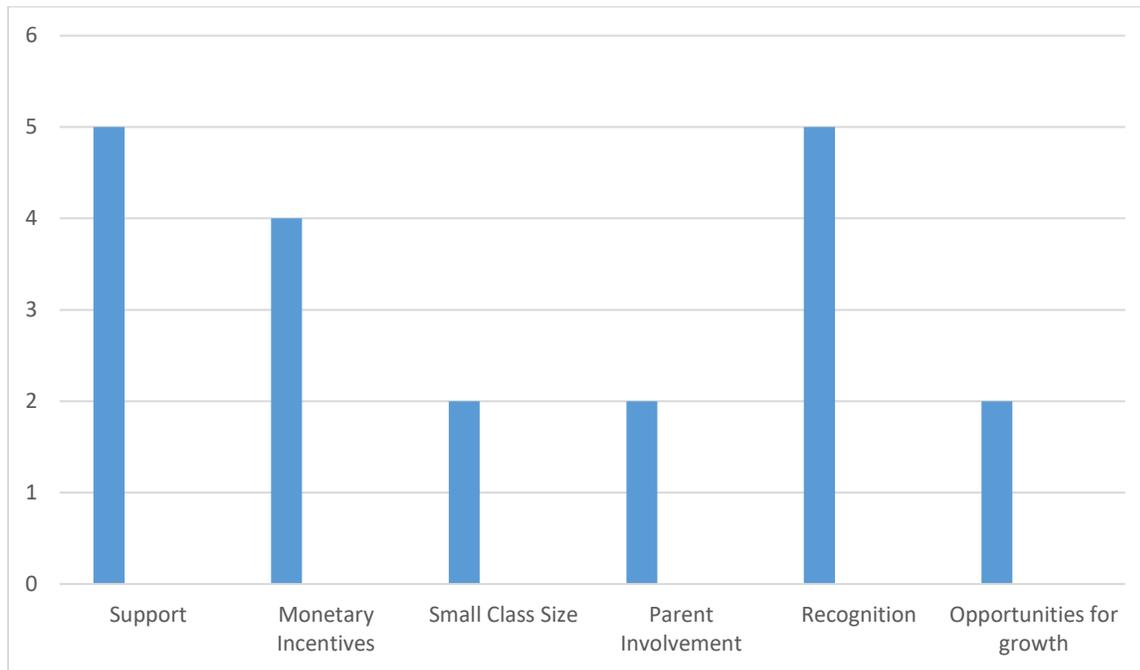
Lack of Opportunities. Two out of six administrator participants acknowledged that effective teachers often leave their positions in urban schools due to their desire for a different experience. Participant 1 stated that in “other schools (suburban), teachers have the freedom to teach; while in urban schools, curriculum is mandated and there is a heavy focus on testing.” Participant 5 agreed that teachers often leave due to the fact that they often feel that their creativity has been diminished in an urban school, and they want a change of scenery to teach without so many mandates looming over them.

Administrators’ Perceptions of Retaining Effective Teachers

After discussing factors that negatively impact teacher retention in urban elementary schools, administrators were asked, “What strategies could be utilized to retain effective teachers?” Through this question, the researcher wanted to gain an understanding of various ideas that could be implemented within the school to retain effective teachers. The researcher also wanted to determine if administrator and educators’ answers aligned.

Figure 4.4

Administrators-Factors that Positively Impact Teacher Retention



Support. Five out of six administrator participants recognized support as a need for retaining effective teachers in urban schools. Participant 6 indicated that effective teachers are often the last to receive instructional supports, such as working with academic coaches due to the large percentage of low-performing teachers found in urban school environments. Participant 2 admitted that administrators often forget about the needs of effective teachers due to the high demands that ineffective teachers require.

Participant 5 articulated that this type of support could also be found with a collaborative team. Working with a collaborative team can help in finding creative strategies to minimize the negative impact of poverty, in order for teachers to feel a sense of accomplishment.

Participant 1 suggested that administrators should ask effective teachers about their needs in order to provide individualized support for their development as effective educators.

Monetary Incentives. Four out of six administrator participants identified monetary incentives as a strategy for retaining effective teachers in urban schools. Participant 4 suggested diversified pay to attract and retain effective teachers in high-needs schools due to the additional work load of urban school educators. Participant 5 added that financial incentives could also include pay for performance student growth and achievement, to reward teachers for increasing student achievement. Participant 2 responded by stating that “urban educators should be compensated for their efforts that go above and beyond the regular job description of a teacher.” She continued by acknowledging that effective teachers work longer hours in order to prepare for instruction in order for their students to improve academically.

Participant 3 described previous incentives utilized by the district to retain effective teachers. These incentives include: bonus pay for student growth on standardized testing, housing incentives, and free master’s degree from a local university. She acknowledged that these strategies worked for a time, until the money ran out. Once the incentives were resolved, the reoccurring issues of teacher retention in urban schools reemerged.

Small Class Size. Two out of six administrator participants suggested that small class size can have a positive impact on teacher retention. Participant 6 acknowledged that urban teachers are more effective when working with students when they have a small class. Participant 4 agreed by stating that “teachers have the ability to better meet the needs and challenges of urban students when they have a small class.” With a small class,

teachers have the ability to differentiate in order to provide effective strategies for all students.

Parental Involvement. Two out of four administrator participants identified the need for increased parental involvement to support teacher retention. Participant 1 began by stating:

When parents, teachers, administration and students are all on the same team, there are positive outcomes for everyone as a result of the collaboration and support. When this partnership forms, everyone takes responsibility for the success of the child. Often times, teachers feel alone in their responsibility to meet the needs of students.

Participant 3 suggested creating multiple opportunities for the stakeholders to come together in order to provide support for one another.

Recognition. Five out of six administrator participants identified teacher recognition as a need for retaining effective teachers. Participant 1 agreed by stating:

When principals recognize small achievements and notice teacher's hard work, it is important to show appreciation publicly. When teachers receive positive feedback for their accomplishments, it makes them want to work harder and validates the effort that they have made.

Participant 2 explained that principals should not solely focus on achievement scores to value teacher effectiveness. The administrators should recognize how teachers support the development of the whole child, instead of solely recognizing teachers based upon test scores.

Participant 4 described teacher recognition as a small act that can potentially lead to large outcomes for retention efforts. She concluded that “teachers deserve a kind word of approval to confirm their accomplishments.

Opportunities for Growth. Two out of six administrator participants acknowledged that effective teachers need opportunities to develop and grow as teacher leaders within their schools. Participant 6 suggested that effective teachers need leadership opportunities in order to make them feel valued and respected as an educator. Participant 2 agreed by stating, “Effective teachers within the building should be the leaders within the school, showcasing their skills within the building.” Effective teachers could potentially utilize their classrooms as the model for instructional practices where struggling teachers observe and are provided support for improvement.

Interview Questions for Teachers

1. Describe your employment background, specifically addressing your work in urban schools.
2. Why did you leave urban educational environments and transfer to suburban or rural educational environments?
3. What would you have needed to stay in an urban educational environment?

Teachers’ Experiences in Urban Education

All participants selected for this study began their teaching careers in urban elementary schools; however, some participants in the study currently teach in a middle school setting. Each teacher has since transferred to a rural or suburban school to continue their teaching journey. All participants remain in the role of a classroom teacher at their current schools.

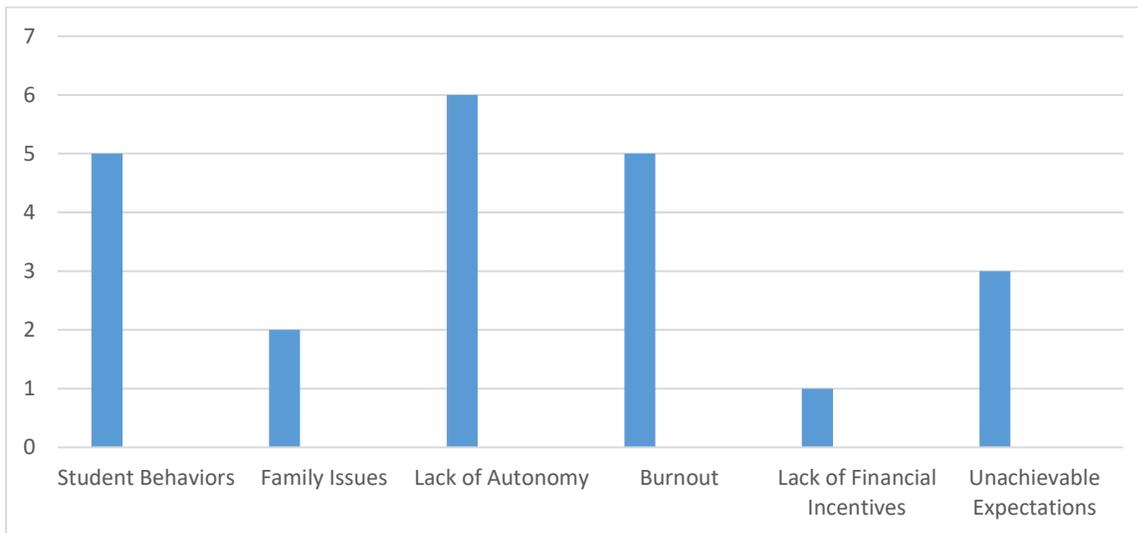
Teachers' Perceptions of Factors that Impact Teacher Attrition

Following the background of the participants' urban experiences, teachers were asked to reflect and identify factors that impacted their desire to leave an urban educational environment.

Figure 4.5 represents various factors that were identified by teachers in the interviews.

Figure 4.5

Teachers-Factors that Negatively Impact Teacher Retention



Student Behaviors. Among the participants five out of the six teacher participants attributed their leaving an urban educational environment to negative student behaviors. Participant 2 described the difficulties in dealing with negative student behaviors as a constant source of stress. Participant 1 stated that one reason that she chose to transfer was the amount of time spent in class dealing with behavioral issues as opposed to covering the necessary expectations for teaching. Participant 5 responded by recalling the problem with “kids not being allowed to just be kids.” This was as a result of the heavy influence of testing in grades three through five. The teacher continued by stating: There were constant behavior problems, but I could hardly blame the students. I knew if I was miserable from constantly focusing on the end of the year assessment, the students

were as well. We needed time to get to know each other and build relationships but staying on track was more important. I think that student behaviors would not have been such an issue, if we had more flexibility to build relationships, instead of being so focused on testing.

Participant 3 described how behavior had an impact in her decision to leave the urban environment.

Although I had some really great children, I also had children who were huge distractions to others. There were students who were constant discipline problems, and administration was little help. I was a teacher who took care of my own issues in my classroom as much as possible, but there were times when it was necessary to send someone to the office. On those occasions, I never really felt like administration did much to prevent these issues from reoccurring. There were also a lot of parents that had really horrible attitudes toward teachers and school in general. There was very rarely an attitude of gratefulness or partnership.

Family Issues. Family issues were discussed as reasons for departure among two of the six teacher participants. Participant 2 explained that she wanted to start a family, but felt that she could not put her family first with the stress of the job. Participant 5 described her family situation:

My son had severe health issues and needed exceptional education classes. I wanted to provide the best experience for him; therefore, I had to transfer schools and teach in another school to get him the assistance and education that he needed.

Lack of Autonomy. All teacher participants identified teacher autonomy as a crucial issue that prompted their departure in an urban school. Participant 2 described the frustration felt amongst teachers in urban schools due to constraints on making decisions that best met the individual needs of their students. Participant 4 stated that “curriculum in urban schools was handed down by the district as a one size fits all approach and did not take into consideration student learning or the time it took students to master skills.” Other participants (5 and 1), spoke about being expected to teach to the test to improve student achievement. This type of teaching did not engage students or teachers and often led to behavior issues due to the lack of engagement. Participant 2 stated that she could not teach the way that she always wanted to, due to district and school mandates.

Burnout. Almost all (five out of six) teacher participants agreed that burnout was a major factor that impacted their decision to leave an urban environment. Participant 1 described a feeling of constant stress; worrying about students not making adequate progress. Participant 2 added that teachers in urban schools worked so much harder than other teachers, but in a way were punished due to all the demands such as additional professional development and constant observations from administration and central office employees. The focus on accountability made it difficult to teach in the high stress environment. Participant 6 indicated that:

Teachers teaching in urban schools worked so much harder at these types of schools than other teachers, but in a way were often punished. Urban school teachers were required to participate in professional development outside of the regular school day. Teachers also received constant observations that were above the mandated requirement. There were

countless hours spent in planning sessions or meetings that prevented actual time for what needed to be done throughout the day.

Participant 5 agreed that there were multiple reasons why she decided to leave her urban elementary school; however her main reason was burnout. She described the following environment:

My time in my urban school was crammed full of professional development during every planning period to the point where I had to plan after school. The county mandated changes on a regular basis that they deemed important, even if what you had been doing showed growth. There was constant intrusion into the room, and these "guests" always came with a "gotcha" attitude.

Lack of Financial Incentives. One out of six teacher participants identified the lack of financial incentives as a rationale for leaving an urban school. Participant 5 explained:

I left my urban school due to the fact that the funding for my position was running out and that the state continually found ways to keep me from receiving a performance bonus I had earned, and I was frustrated. For example: To receive bonus money you had to be present 95% of the time. That particular year, I missed 9 days due to my son's illness, which averaged out to 94.8%. The school system would not give me the bonus because it was not 95%.

Unachievable Expectations. Half (three out of six) teacher participants responded that administrators and central office staff held unachievable expectations for teachers.

Participant 3 indicated that there was an enormous amount of pressure put on the teachers to raise scores, and even if you raised the scores, it never seemed enough. Participant 2

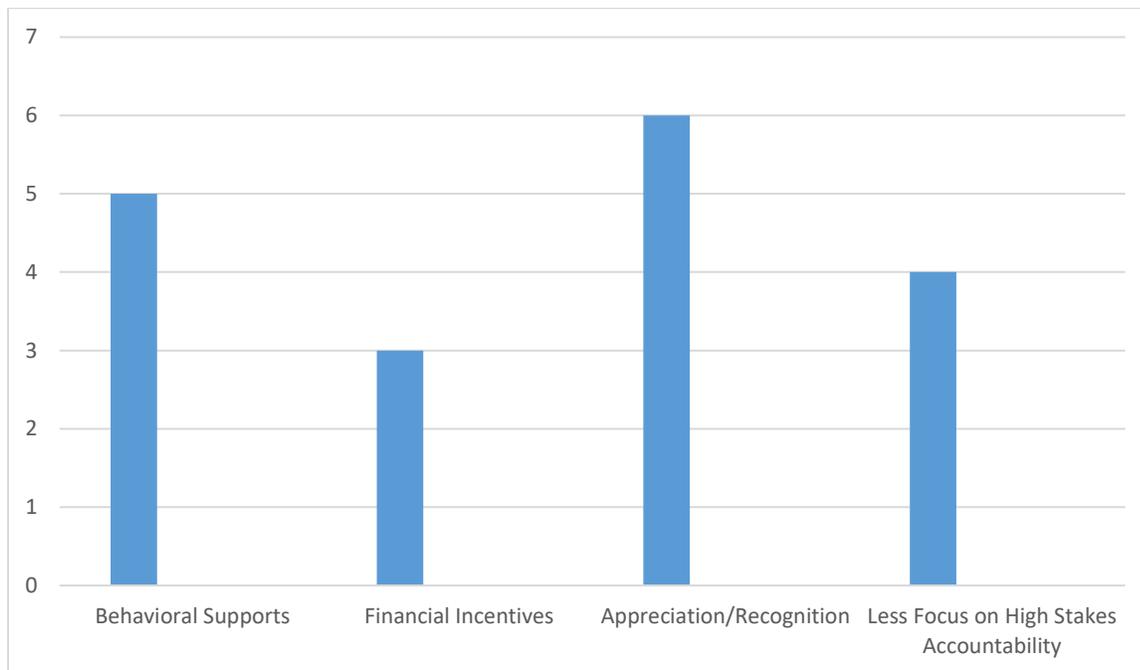
agreed that even if growth was made the previous year, the target continued to raise. The issue was not necessarily having high expectations; during this time, standards continued to change, as well as introducing more rigorous assessments.

Teachers' Perceptions of Factors that Positively Impact Teacher Retention

Following the discussion of negative factors that impact teacher attrition, teachers were asked “What would have needed to remain teaching in an urban educational environment?” Figure 4.6 identifies the various educator responses of strategies for retaining effective educators.

Figure 4.6

Teachers-Factors that Positively Impact Teacher Retention



Behavioral Supports. For five out of six teacher participants providing behavioral supports for students in urban schools would have impacted their decision to remain a teacher in an urban environment. Participant 6 suggested that administrators provide a

school-wide behavior plan that identifies behavioral expectations for students. Participant 3 agreed that having administrator support with behavior would have improved the situation. Many participants stated that they would have stayed in an urban school setting, if student behaviors were more manageable and supports were in place to assist teachers with student behaviors. Participant 2 stated that “having steeper consequences and more meaningful consequences for inappropriate behavior would also have helped.”

Financial Incentives. Half (three out of six) teacher participants acknowledged that financial incentives would have prompted them to continue teaching in an urban environment. Participant 6 explained that “teachers should be compensated for student growth on achievement measures.” Participant 1 discussed that teachers want to be rewarded for their hard work and long hours and a monetary bonus would help teacher morale.

Recognition. All participants identified that recognition from administrators and district officials is valued. Participant 2 stated that it seems everyone is so focused on the things that teachers need to improve on that they often forget that teachers need to be recognized for working diligently to student achievement. Participant 5 shared that something as small as a kind word or note from an administrator would increase teacher motivation and productivity. She continued by stating that all teachers want is to know that they are needed and valued. Participant 3 added:

I think having an admin and county office that appreciated what we were doing as teachers would have definitely helped keep me in an urban environment. Most teachers were made to feel like they were doing a horrible job, and constantly being told negative things rather than positive things. A little pat on the back can go a long way.

Less Focus on High Stakes Accountability. Four out of six teacher participants indicated that having less of a focus on high stakes accountability would have helped the culture and climate of the urban school. Participant 1 explained this challenge as being surrounded by amazing teachers at the urban school where she previously taught; however, all district officials saw were failing test scores. She continued by stating that “urban teachers need to be provided the freedom to teach.” Because of this freedom, children would be more successful if the teachers utilized their talents in the classroom (the reason they wanted to teach in the first place).

Phenomenological Data Analysis

After the conclusion of all participant interviews, the researcher analyzed the interview transcripts and listened to the audio recordings of the interviews in order to obtain an impression for what has been verbalized about the phenomenon being studied, teacher attrition in urban schools. The researcher then studied all aspects of the experience as described by the participants. This includes physical surroundings, objects, other people present, type of activity, outcome, social and personal interactions, time frame, emotions, belief or value systems, and attitudes.

Member Checks

Throughout the interview process, the researcher utilized participant feedback in order to improve the accuracy, credibility, and validity of the study. The researcher built rapport with the interviews in order to obtain honest and open responses to the questions posed. During the interviews, the researcher restated and summarized information collected and then questioned the participants to determine accuracy. Following the interviews, the researcher shared the findings based on the information collected with all involved participants.

Peer Debriefing Sessions

Following each interview, the researcher worked with various colleagues in the field of education to examine transcripts of the interviews, methodology utilized, as well as the final report in order to ensure credibility and validity of the study.

Open Coding

After the researcher conducted interviews and read through the data several times, she highlighted text in various colors according to commonalities. Following this step, the researcher created tentative labels based upon the meaning that emerged from the data in the margin of the transcribed interviews.

Axial Coding

After the initial codes were created by the researcher, codes were grouped and combined into categories that were connected. The researcher began to identify relationships amongst the open codes that were previously identified.

Identifying Themes

After the researcher completed the coding process of the participants' interview transcripts, themes were identified that encapsulated all of the codes.

Question 2: Why do effective teachers choose to leave urban schools and transfer to suburban or rural educational environments?

Stress. The emerging theme, identified by both administrators and teachers as to why effective teachers leave urban schools, is stress. Administrators and teachers identified various categories such as burnout, student behaviors, and accountability that prompted teachers to leave an urban school environment. All of these factors induced stress upon educators in an urban environment. When reviewing the transcripts of the interviews, stress was the physical and

mental consequence of an environment where teachers consistently dealt with student behaviors, focus on accountability, and teacher burnout.

Lack of Autonomy. An additional theme of lack of autonomy developed as a result of educator interviews. Educators discussed mandated curricula, planning time being taken for meetings, time spent in professional development, and the inability to educate students in an engaging way due to the demands of the high stakes assessment.

Question 3: What do teachers need in order to stay in an urban educational environment?

Support. Administrators and educators both identified various supports that would have prompted effective educators to remain in an urban educational environment. Participants mentioned behavioral supports that included strategies for dealing with difficult student behaviors. An additional support that administrators and educators determined were financial supports based upon the differentiated work load that urban educators have compared to other teachers in rural or suburban schools. Another support mentioned in the interviews was instructional supports for effective teachers that include working with academic coaches to continually improve their teaching practice.

Recognition. Recognition emerged as a theme from interviews of both administrators and educators. Participants identified the need to be recognized for their hard work, as well as shown appreciation from administrators and central office staff. There is a feeling amongst teachers that their work will never be good enough. Both participants acknowledged that recognition is a simple act; however, it is rarely implemented, but an essential factor in retaining effective teachers.

Recognition can also be found in recognizing educator talents in supporting the mission and vision of the school. Based upon the interviews, administrators identified that effective teachers desired the opportunity for professional growth. This professional growth aligns with recognition due to teachers sharing their talents with other stakeholders in order to improve the teaching and learning within the school.

District Exit Interviews

At the culmination of the 2016-2017 academic school year, the school district that employed the identified teachers and administrators from this study conducted an exit interview. This exit interview was provided to employees that transferred to a different position within the system, left the system, retired, or were promoted or demoted to another position within the district. The exit interview included all positions within the district; however, the researcher chose to focus only on classroom teachers to align with the research study. Approximately 49 classroom teachers participated in the school district's exit interview, with most participants being female. The overall percentage of participants that were from urban elementary schools was not identified in the exit interview data.

Participants in the exit interview were asked, "What contributed to your decision to leave your current position?" Participant responses are shown in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7 District Exit Interviews

What contributed to your decision to leave your current position?

Rationale	Percentage
Employment Conditions	23.66
Inadequate Mentoring	8.6
Inadequate Support	22.58
Lack of Autonomy	10.75
Quality of Supervision	12.9
Workload	12.9
Lack of Recognition for Work	15.05

Based upon this research study, several of the identified themes were also aligned to the school district’s exit interview: support, autonomy, stress (workload and employment conditions), and recognition.

Summary

The experiences of the contributors assisted in identifying the formation of various themes that emerged from the study in determining factors that impact teacher retention in urban schools. The research was specifically designed to represent the perceptions of the participants’ attitudes and beliefs about teacher retention and attrition. The narrative also established regularities and parallels with participants’ responses that resulted in identifying clusters and developed themes.

The multiple sources of data collected from urban administrators and former urban educators produced various understandings of what negatively and positively impacts teacher retention in urban elementary schools. The knowledge gathered from this study provides an

opportunity to modify the way in which administrators, central office, and school districts work with urban educators in order to reduce teacher attrition in urban schools.

The research questions have been analyzed and will be utilized in the next chapter to determine the conclusions of the data collected.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to attend to the findings of this study, this chapter is compartmentalized into four sections. The first section details the summary of the study that was completed. The second section examines the findings of the study and how they relate to the research questions posed within the study. The third section analyzes the conclusions of the study from various literature as well as participant information gathered throughout this study. The final section addresses recommendations for future research that can possibly be conducted to develop additional conclusions for teacher attrition in urban elementary schools.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify the primary factors that impact teacher attrition in urban elementary schools, in order for school leaders and school districts to utilize possible solutions for teacher retention issues recognized through this study. This study was directed to identify and understand the rationale of teacher attrition through the voices of urban administrators and former urban educators that were identified as participants within the study. The study involved collecting data through open-ended, one-one-one, semi-structured interviews with six urban administrators and six former urban teachers.

Nationally, schools lose between \$1 billion and \$2.2 billion in attrition costs each year through teachers moving or leaving the profession (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2014). Frequently, the shift occurs among teachers moving from poor to non-poor schools, from high-minority to low-minority schools and from urban to suburban schools. The result is a spiral of loss that affects high-poverty schools disproportionately. Ingersoll (2004) stated that without access to excellent peers and mentors and/or opportunities for collaboration and feedback, "teachers' performance in high-poverty schools stall within a

few years and the teachers depart for green pastures — at rates roughly 50 percent higher than in affluent schools. Ultimately, the report notes, these hard-to-staff schools become known as "places to leave, not places in which to stay.

The information gathered from this study identified specific themes from the voices and opinions of current urban school administrators, as well as former effective educators that chose to leave the urban educational environment. Common themes of teacher attrition factors were developed in this study by both administrators and teachers. These themes included: stress and lack of autonomy. In addition, administrators and educators identified the need for support and recognition in order to retain effective educators in an urban educational setting.

Research Questions

This research on the challenges facing effective teachers in urban school lends itself to the following question:

1. What are the primary factors that impact teacher retention in urban elementary schools?

Findings/Interpretations

The research question was answered through semi-structured interviews of six current urban administrators, as well as six former urban elementary educators. All interviews were recorded and transcribed, as well as coded through open coding and axial coding structures that resulted in initial codes that created categories that are identified in this study as themes. The following is a brief discussion of the findings in relation to the developed themes.

Factors that Negatively Impact Teacher Attrition- Theme 1: Stress

As a result of the semi-structured interviews, administrators and educators identified stress as a negative factor that impacts teacher attrition. Stress in an urban school was often the result of teacher burnout, focus on accountability, as well as negative student behaviors.

Teacher Burnout. Roloff & Brown (2011) describe teacher burnout as a serious psychological condition that affects the lives of thousands of highly effective teachers in the United States. An educator who is experiencing burnout often has low morale, low self-esteem and is physically exhausted. Teachers who experience burnout have three categories of symptoms: exhaustion, depersonalization, and diminished personal achievement.

Exhaustion is experienced when a teacher feels as though all his emotional resources are used up. Depersonalization occurs when one separates himself from colleagues, family, and friends. Separation may manifest through a physical isolation or through distancing oneself emotionally. Teacher burnout is most often an organizational problem and it is insidious because it can remove dedicated teachers from the field of education, sometimes even before they physically leave their jobs (Elias, 2012).

Twenty-first century educators are faced with more demands than teachers in any previous era (Kozol, 2008). Due to the breakdown of the American family, they are expected to act as social workers, health care providers, and parents while continuing to educate the children about core content areas, technology, and the global community (Kozol, 2008). Teachers are also faced with a growing amount of paperwork, pressure to teach to standardized tests, and a constant need to defend themselves against the public belief that schools are failing the children of the nation (Kozol, 2008). Career-related stress from difficult students, excessive work hours, new and additional demands, and negative

relationships with coworkers or administrators takes a prolonged period of time to fix.

Therefore, these challenges may lead to maladaptive responses.

Focus on Accountability. Education policies in the United States and other nations have established academic standards and made teachers accountable for improved standardized test scores. In recent years, state and national leaders in the United States, backed by public opinion, have taken the view that public schools frequently fail to give students a good education, causing a myriad of bad outcomes and, in the view of some, even putting the national welfare in jeopardy (Madaus, Raczek, & Clarke, 1997). This perceived problem has resulted in policies to hold educators accountable for imparting higher academic standards, as measured by high-stakes, standardized tests (Elmore, Abelman, & Fuhrman, 1996). Educational reform models that include high-stakes accountability measures may have unintended negative outcomes that contribute to teacher burnout (Berryhill, Linney & Fromewick, 2009).

Student accountability is central to school reform movements. In the United States, schools that do not meet annual test performance goals can be subject to whole staff restructuring resulting in administrators and teachers losing their jobs (Cucchiara, Rooney, & Robertson-Kraft, 2014). In addition, some states have eliminated teacher tenure and now place a greater emphasis on student test scores in evaluating teacher effectiveness (Helms, 2013). However, teaching effectiveness may not be accurately reflected in student test performance (Baker et al., 2010) given susceptibility to outside variables such as student attendance and psychosocial variables (Corcoran, 2010). In addition, the increased use of student test performance within evaluations of teacher quality may increase teacher stress (von der Embse, Kilgus, Solomon, Bowler, & Curtis, 2015) leading to counterproductive instructional practices and lower student

achievement (Putwain & Best, 2012). Berryhill, Linney & Fromewick (2009) explain that numerous professional educators leave the classroom due to feeling that their efforts are ineffective, the tasks are never ending, and the payoff is not imminent.

It is undeniable that teachers who work high-poverty schools tend to experience the most Draconian forms of high- stakes accountability. Examples of policies that may demoralize teachers are scripted lessons that divest teachers of using their talents in planning, mandated curriculum that allows no space for teachers to respond to students' academic needs and interests and testing practices that make teachers feel complicit in doing harm to their students (Rosales, 2012).

Negative Student Behaviors. Geving (2007) found that poor student behavior is a main contributor to teacher related stress that leads to attrition. In Geving's study there were 10 specific student behaviors found to be statistically significant contributors to teacher stress. The behavior factors leading to teacher stress from the most stressful to the least stressful (but still statistically significant) are: hostility towards the teacher, not paying attention during class, noisiness, lack of effort in class, coming to class unprepared, hyperactivity, breaking school rules, harming school property, hostility toward other students, and lack of interest in learning.

Conclusions

There is a danger that threatens teacher well-being that is often overlooked. The threat is stress and it is something that nearly half of all teachers say that experience at a high level every day (Ansley, Meyers, McPhee & Varjas, 2018). Teachers do much more than teach academic lessons. They must also manage classroom behavior and keep an eye on helping students grow

and develop socially in a healthy way. On top of that, teachers must coordinate with other adults and keep records of just about everything they do.

Teachers are expected to perform these tasks effectively, even when their students face difficulties outside the classroom, from unmet needs to mental health issues. The more needs students have, the more teachers are expected to do.

The consequences of teacher stress are far-reaching and adversely impact not just the teacher, but everyone around them, most notably their students.

Recommendations

There are ways to lessen teacher stress and boost their capacity to increase performance. School leaders can help reduce teacher stress by cultivating working conditions that support teachers. Teachers experience less stress and commit to jobs more often under satisfactory working conditions. The working conditions that lead to the most job satisfaction involve administrative and collegial support. In other words, teachers need their leaders to provide constructive feedback that helps improve their performance.

Schools can also help reduce teacher stress by promoting effective teacher-student interactions. One way to accomplish this is by using strategies that reward positive student behaviors. Teachers in schools with that utilize positive strategies on a school wide basis to support student behavior experience significantly lower levels of burnout. To promote positive teacher-student relationships, experts recommend a ratio of five positive supports for each punitive action. In other words, teachers should be commending students for doing the right thing five times as often as they take away privileges or scold them for doing the wrong thing.

Teachers also need to make sure they take care of themselves so that they can take care of others. Without actively caring for themselves, teachers lose the capacity to care for others. Given the demands of teaching, it may be easy for teachers to put their own needs last. A comprehensive self-care plan may help teachers identify signs of stress and improve their stress management skills. Examples of stress-reducing strategies with the most scientific support include yoga, exercise and mindfulness meditation. Yoga and exercise require physical exertion and have benefits beyond physical fitness. Both also trigger hormones that relieve stress and are associated with better mental focus and mood. No specific skills are required for mindfulness meditation, and with even a few minutes of practice most days, benefits include improvements to self-awareness, mental concentration and emotion regulation.

Factors that Negatively Impact Teacher Attrition- Theme 2: Lack of Autonomy

Over the past few years, there has been an ever-growing chorus of pundits who argue that teachers have grown to deeply dislike their jobs. They argue that teachers are unhappy with the lack of control and freedom. These pundits believe that discouraged educators have been fleeing the profession in droves (Boser & Hanna, 2014). Related to autonomy is the idea that local decision makers, mainly teachers, would become more involved in decisions related to schooling. This, in turn, would lead to greater teacher commitment to and ownership of the school.

Conclusions

As a result of federal accountability laws, numerous teachers feel as if schools have been transformed into a test-driven machine that has ultimately driven talent out of the education profession. Some schools have adopted strategies that put teachers in a pedagogical constraint in order to teach to the test. Teaching is an inherently complex and difficult job. Decades of

research tell us that individual students have very distinct learning styles and thus teaching needs. Making those adjustments minute-by-minute for 20 or 30 students simultaneously in different subjects is immensely complicated. It requires a smart, adaptable, skilled teacher. In other words, a professional -- someone with the ability to understand what students need and the power to act on that knowledge.

Recommendations

Only by relinquishing some autonomy will teachers finally be able to attain the true professional status they deserve (Carey, 2008). Pressing for collective autonomy—where groups of teachers work collaboratively to make school-level decisions about a variety of factors—has even greater potential to benefit students and make teaching a more attractive career path. School leaders who regularly include their constituents in the decision-making process find it advantageous in many different ways. Effective teachers understand that involving stakeholders in the decision-making process can ultimately transform a school. Progressive transformation is continuous and ongoing. It must become a mindset and regular way of making decisions to maximize effectiveness. School leaders must actively invest in the opinions of others, understanding that they do not have all the answers themselves.

Factors that Positively Impact Teacher Attrition- Theme 1: Support

Teacher Support. The level of support that teachers receive can make a huge difference in the way they feel about their jobs. A survey from the Center for Teacher Quality (2018), which included responses from 32,000 teachers, revealed that support from colleagues and administrators is one of the most significant factors in a teacher's decision to stay or leave the profession. By ensuring that teachers feel supported and cared for, administrators can keep teachers satisfied in their current positions.

Behavioral Supports. Classroom management is intended to provide students with more opportunities to learn all the things that a teacher does to organize students, space, time, and materials so that learning can take place. Students should be able to carry out their maximum potential, which allows students to develop appropriate behavior patterns. Teachers must deal with unexpected events and have the ability to control student behavior, using effective classroom management strategies. Effective classroom management and positive classroom climate construction are essential goals for all teachers (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016).

Teachers are mostly experts in the subjects they teach, but very often teachers have problems with discipline. Wiseman and Hunt (2008) list important statistics. Beginning almost forty years ago, from 1968 to now, discipline was identified as the most important problem that teachers face.

It is important that teachers have an in-depth understanding of the subjects that they teach. But the knowledge of subject matter alone is not sufficient to ensure that teachers will be effective and that students will be successful in their learning. To be effective, teachers also must understand their students' interests and styles of learning. The knowledge base of motivation is so extensive that the crucial factor is making the best choice for a problem. If we have not learned the extensive motivational knowledge base, then our choices are limited (Aldermann, 2004).

Conclusion

Teachers want to be in environments where they are going to be successful with students, work alongside supportive colleagues, and where they work together as a team. Support for teachers is vital because once they enter the classroom, they often feel lonely and isolated (DeAngelis, 2012). Teachers need a network of support, especially in the first four years of their

career. A school's success rests on its teachers, and teachers' successes grows exponentially with a supportive administration. The schools that build supportive environments deliver teachers continuous opportunities to grow and learn, while providing the tools they need to do their job, and enable them to build good relationships with parents so they can work as partners on behalf of the child.

Recommendations

Having a supportive principal can make all the difference for a teacher. Teachers want to know that their principal has their best interests in mind. One of the main duties of a principal is to provide ongoing, collaborative teacher support. The relationship between a teacher and a principal has to be built on a foundation of trust. This type of relationship takes a lot of time to build. Principals must slowly cultivate these relationships while taking the time to get to know each teacher's strength and weaknesses.

Teachers should be given time to work together in a collaborative effort. This collaboration will strengthen relationships amongst your faculty, provide new or struggling teachers with an outlet to gain valuable insight and advice, and allows teachers to share best practices and success stories.

Teachers are people, and all people go through difficult times both personally and professionally at some point in their lives. When a teacher is going through a difficult situation personally (death, divorce, illness, etc.), a principal should give them 100% support at all times. A teacher going through a personal issue will appreciate any support their principal shows during this time.

Factors that Positively Impact Teacher Attrition- Theme 2: Recognition

Recognition. Working within today's test-driven environment has certainly caused educators to recognize and analyze failures. The drive to improve is relentless. This is not necessarily all bad. But as a result, it has become more important than ever for principals to take a strong lead in celebrating successes (Wilhelm, 2015). According to Marzano (2005), an affirmer principal systematically and fairly recognizes the accomplishments of teachers, staff and students. He or she also systematically and fairly recognizes the failures of and celebrates the accomplishments of the school as a whole.

Conclusions

Good employees do not clock-watch but carry on till the job is completed. Excellent employees go the extra mile, see what needs doing and, again, see it through. Most teachers do both, all the more because they are responding to the needs of their pupils, of the children in their care. Teachers have a human need to be appreciated, to be stroked a little in recognition of the extra they put in (Trafford, 2016). Recognition is a very rewarding experience for an excellent classroom teacher and his or her students. Recognition for teachers builds off of some of the well-known extrinsic and intrinsic motivational theories. It offers hope for meaningful recognition to the other teachers working to improve student-learning outcomes. It also brings pride and support from the teacher's students, administration, governing board and general public.

Recommendations

Recognizing effective teachers in public ways can help school leaders highlight the qualities they value most. Rewarding the best teachers can help them set the standard, or even raise the bar for staff performance. Thoughtful recognition of teacher accomplishments is a good

way to establish a positive climate, build school community, and raise achievement. This also includes providing teachers with opportunities to share their passions with other stakeholders. This strategy goes a long way in building teacher productivity and ensuring retention of valued staff. According to The New Teacher Project (2012), principals should recognize excellence publicly and frequently. This can be accomplished in regular meetings to publicly celebrate teachers who have done exceptional work in the classroom or achieved a notable milestone with their students. Congratulate them and connect what they're doing to the school's goals and vision of great teaching. Do not praise everyone every time; nothing demoralizes effective teachers more than false praise for mediocre or poor performance.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study focused on factors that impacted teacher attrition in urban elementary schools; however, additional research is needed in order to identify effective strategies that urban schools utilize to recruit and retain effective educators over time. The research that was conducted for this study provided examples of retainment strategies for urban educators; however, the research lacked longitudinal data that proved the strategies' effectiveness.

Summary

The conclusions of this study resulted in a deeper understanding of factors that impact teacher attrition in urban schools. In addition, these findings may assist educational leaders in identifying and developing practices that will positively impact effective teacher retention in the highest need schools. It is this researcher's hope that through the implementation of identified recommendations in this study, the result will be more effective educators remaining in the urban educational environment.

References

- Ahram, R., Stembridge, A., Fergus, E., & Noguera, P. (2011). Framing urban school challenges: The problems to examine when implementing response to intervention. Retrieved from <http://www.rtinetwork.org/learn/diversity/urban-school-challenges>
- Akerlind, G. (2005). Variation and commonality in phenomenographic research methods. *Higher Education Research and Development, 24*(1), 321-334.
- Alderman, M. (2004). Motivation for achievement: possibilities for teaching and learning (2nd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Alliance for Excellent Education. (2014). On the path to equity: Improving the effectiveness of beginning teachers. Retrieved from <https://all4ed.org/reports-factsheets/path-to-equity/>
- American Psychological Association. (2014). The road to resilience. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience.aspx>
- Ansley, B., Meyers, J., McPhee, K., & Varjas, K. (2018). The hidden threat of teacher stress. Retrieved from https://www.salon.com/2018/03/11/the-hidden-threat-of-teacher-stress_partner/
- Aspfors, J., & Fransson, G. (2015). Research on mentor education for mentors of newly qualified teachers: A qualitative meta-synthesis. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 48*, 75-86.
- Atkinson, D., & Juntunen, C. (1994). School counselors and school psychologists as school-home-

- community liaisons in ethnically diverse schools. *Multicultural counseling in schools: A practical handbook* (pp.103–119). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York, NY: Cambridge University.
- Barnard, A., McCosker, H., & Gerber, R. (1999). Phenomenography: A qualitative research approach to understanding health care. *Qualitative Health Research, 9*(2), 212-226.
- Bernshausen, D., & Cunningham, C. (2001). The role of resiliency in teacher preparation and retention. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED451191.pdf>
- Berryhill, J., Linney, J., & Fromewick, J. (2009). The effects of education accountability on teachers: Are policies too-stress provoking for their own good? *International Journal of Education Policy and Leadership 4*(5).
- Birdsong, K. (2016). 10 Facts about how poverty impacts education. Retrieved from <https://www.scilearn.com/blog/ten-facts-about-how-poverty-impacts-education>
- Bobek, B. (2002). Teacher resiliency: A key to career longevity. *Clearing House, 75*(4), 202.
- Boe, E. E., Bobbitt, S. A., & Cook, L. H. (1997). Whither didst thou go? Retention, reassignment, migration, and attrition of special and general education teachers in national perspective. *The Journal of Special Education, 30*, 371–389.
- Bondy, E. & McKenzie, J. (1999). Resilience building and social reconstructionist teaching: A first-year teacher's story. *The Elementary School Journal, 100*(2), 129-150.

Boser, U. & Hanna, R. (2014). In the quest to improve schools, have teachers been stripped of their autonomy? *Center for American Progress*.

Boyd, D., Lankford, H., Loeb, S. & Wyckoff, J. (2005). Explaining the short careers of high achieving teachers in schools with low-performing students. *American Economic Review*, 95(2), 166-171.

Brasher, J. (2017) Teacher merit pay has merit. Retrieved from <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/ideas-in-action/2017/10/teacher-merit-pay-has-merit/>

Brooks, R., & Goldstein, S. (2002). *Nurturing Resilience in Our Children: Answers to the Most Common Parenting Questions*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Brown, K., & Wynn, S. (2007). Teacher retention issues: How some principals are supporting and keeping new teachers. *Journal of School Leadership*, 17(6), 664-698.

Carey, K. (2008). The teacher autonomy paradox. *The American Prospect*. Retrieved from <http://prospect.org/article/teacher-autonomy-paradox>

Charters, W. (1970). Some factors affecting teacher survival rates in school districts. *American Educational Research Journal*, 7(1), 1-27.

Clotfelter, C., Ladd, H., & Vigdor, J. (2007). Teacher credentials and student achievement: Longitudinal analysis with student fixed effects. *Economics of Education Review*, 26(6), 673-682.

Collins, P. H. (2000). Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of

- empowerment (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Cucchiara, M. B., Rooney, E., & Robertson-Kraft, C. (2015). I've never seen people work so hard! Teachers' working conditions in the early stages of school turnaround. *Urban Education, 50*(3), 259-287.
- Curtis, C. (2012). Why do they choose to teach – and why do they leave? A study of middle school and high school mathematics teachers. *Education, 132*(4), 779–788.
- Dance, L. J. (2002). Tough fronts: The impact of street culture on schooling. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2000). Solving the dilemmas of teacher supply, demand, and standards. New York: National Commission on Education and America's Future.
- Darling-Hammond, L. & Carver-Thomas, D. (2016). A coming crisis in teaching: Teacher supply, demand, and shortages in the U.S. Retrieved from https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/A_Coming_Crisis_in_Teaching_REPORT.pdf
- DeAngelis, T. (2012). Support for teachers. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/monitor/2012/02/teachers.aspx>
- Di Carlo, M. (2015). Update on teacher turnover in the U.S. Retrieved from <http://www.shankerinstitute.org/blog/update-teacher-turnover-us>
- Ebersole, M., Kanahale-Mossman, H., & Kawakami, A. (2016). Culturally responsive teaching:

- examining teacher's understandings and perspectives. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, 4(2), 97-104.
- Education Northwest. (2014). Teacher recruitment, induction, and retention. Retrieved from <http://nwcc.educationnorthwest.org/sites/default/files/research-brief-teacher-recruitment-induction-retention.pdf>
- Elias, M. (2012) Teacher burnout: What are the warning signs? Retrieved from <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/teacher-burnout-warning-signs-maurice-elias>
- Elmore, R., Abelman C., and Fuhrman, S. (1996) The New Accountability in State Education Reform: From Process to Performance. In *Holding Schools Accountable: Performance-Based Reform in Education*, edited by Helen F. Ladd, 65–98. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution.
- Fletcher, S., Strong, M. (2009). Full-release and site-based mentoring of new elementary grade teachers: An analysis of changes in student achievement. *New Educator*, 5, 329–341.
- Fox, W. & Bayat, M.S. (2007). *A Guide to Managing Research*. Juta Publications.
- Frankenberg, E. & Siegel-Hawley, G. (2012). Not just urban policy: Suburbs, segregation, and charter schools. *American Association of School Administrators*, 8(4), 3-13.
- Gay, G. (2002). Preparing for culturally responsive teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 53(2), 106-116.
- Geving, A. (2007). Identifying the types of student and teacher behaviors associated with teacher

- stress. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 23(5), 624-640.
- Goldhaber, D. (2007). Can teacher quality be effectively assessed? National board certification as a signal of effective teaching. *Review of Economics and Statistics* 89, 134-150.
- Gordon, K. & Coscarelli, W. (1996). Recognizing and fostering resilience. *Performance Improvement*, 35(9), 14-17.
- Grissom, J. (2011). Can good principals keep teachers in disadvantaged schools? Linking principal effectiveness to teacher satisfaction and turnover in hard-to-staff environments. *Teachers College Record*, 113, 2552–2585.
- Guin, K. (2004). Chronic teacher turnover in urban elementary schools. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 12(42).
- Hampton, B., Peng, L., & Ann, J. (2008). Pre-service teachers' perceptions of urban schools. *The Urban Review*, 40(3), 268-295.
- Hanushek, E., Kain, J. & Rivkin, S. (1999). Do higher salaries buy better teachers? Working paper No. 7082. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.
- Harris, P. (2002). Survey of California teachers. Rochester, NY: Peter Harris Research Group.
- Hart, B. & Risley, T. (1995). *Meaningful differences in the everyday experience of young American children*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Company.
- Helms, A. (2013). Protest targets testing. *Charlotte Observer*, p.3b.

- Henderson, N. (2003). Havens of resilience. *Educational Leadership*, 71(1), 22-27.
- Hoppey, Y., Jacobs, J. & Dana, N. (2009). Critical concepts of mentoring in an urban context. *New Educator*, 5(1), 25-44.
- Ingersoll, R. (2001). Teacher turnover and teacher shortages: An organizational analysis. Retrieved from http://repository.upenn.edu/gse_pubs/94
- Ingersoll, R. (2004). Why do high-poverty schools have difficulty staffing their classrooms with qualified teachers? Washington, D.C.: Center for American Progress.
- Ingersoll, R., & May, H. (2011). Recruitment, retention and the minority teacher shortage. Retrieved from http://repository.upenn.edu/gse_pubs/226
- Kersaint, G., Lewis, J., Potter, R., & Meisels, G. (2007). Why teachers leave: Factors that influence resignation. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 23(6), 775-794.
- Kincheloe, J. (2010). Urban questions: Teaching in the city. *Counterpoints*, 215 (19), 1-25.
- Kirby, S., Berends, M., & Naftel, S. (1999). Supply and demand of minority teachers in Texas: Problems and prospects. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 21(1), 47-66.
- Kozol, J. (2008). Letters to a young teacher. New York: Crown.
- Kraft, M., Marinell, W., & Shen-Wei Yee, D. (2016). School organizational contexts, teacher turnover, and student achievement: Evidence from panel data. *American Educational Research Journal*, 53(5)

- Ladd, H. (2008). Value-added modeling of teacher credentials: Policy implications. Paper presented at the second annual CALDER research conference. Washington, D.C., November 21. http://www.caldercenter.org/upload/Sunny_Ladd_presentation.pdf.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2011). Is meeting the diverse needs of all students possible? *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, 48(1), 13-15.
- Laine, S. (2008). Recruiting great teachers for urban schools: State policy options. Presentation at the National Summit on Recruiting, Preparing, and Retaining Quality Urban Teachers, Denver, CO.
- Leon, M. (2014). Distributed mentoring: Preparing pre-service resident teachers for high needs urban high schools. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1044196.pdf>
- Levine, A., & Haselkorn, D. (2008). Teaching at the precipice. *Education Week*, 28(11), 32-34.
- Lippman, L., Burns, S., & McArthur, E. (1996). Urban schools: The challenge of location and poverty. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, US Department of Education.
- Madaus, G, Raczek, A, Clarke, M. (1997). Historical and Policy Foundations of the Assessment Movement. In A. Goodwin (Ed.), *Assessment for Equity and Inclusion: Embracing All Our Children*. London: Routledge Books.
- Marinell, W. & Coca, V. (2013). Who stays and who leaves? Retrieved from https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/research_alliance/publications/ttp_synthesis

Mark, J., & Anderson, B. (1978). Teacher survival rates: A current look. *American Educational Research Journal*, 15(3), 379-382.

Marton, F. (1981). Phenomenography: Describing conceptions of the world around us. *Instructional Science*, 10, 177-200

Marzano, R. (2003). *What Works in Schools: Translating Research into Action*. ASCD: Alexandria, VA.

Mills, C. (2008). Making a difference: moving beyond the superficial treatment of diversity. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 36(4), 261-275.

Monroe, C. R., & Obidah, J. E. (2004). The influence of cultural synchronization in a teacher's perception of disruption. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 55(3), 256–268.

Murnane, R.J. (1981). Teacher mobility revisited. *Journal of Human Resources* 16(1), 3-19.

National Center for Children in Poverty (2017). Child poverty. Retrieved from <http://nccp.org/topics/childpoverty.html>

National Center for Education Statistics. (2016). The condition of education. Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/>

National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. (1996). *What matters most: Teaching for America's future*. Retrieved from <https://nctaf.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/WhatMattersMost.pdf>

National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. (2007). The cost of teacher turnover study and calculator. Retrieved from <https://nctaf.org/teacher-turnover-cost-calculator/the-cost-of-teacher-turnover-study-and-cost-calculator/>

New York University. (2017). Keeping the teachers: The problem of high turnover in urban schools. Retrieved from <https://teachereducation.steinhardt.nyu.edu/high-teacher-turnover/>

Patterson, J., Collings, L., & Abbott, G. (2004). A study of teacher resilience in urban schools. *Journal of Instructional Psychology, 31*(1).

Podolsky, A., Klnl, T., Bishop, J., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2016). Solving the teacher shortage: How to attract and retain excellent educators. Learning Policy Institute. Retrieved from <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/solving-teacher-shortage>

Polidore, E. (2004). The teaching experiences of Lucille Bradley, Maudester Hicks, and Algeno McPherson before, during, and after desegregation in the rural south: A theoretical model of adult resilience among three African American female educators (Doctoral dissertation, Sam Houston State University, 2004). *Dissertation Abstracts International, 65*, (08), 2924A

Primary Sources: America's Teachers on the Teaching Profession. (2012). Retrieved from https://www.scholastic.com/primarysources/pdfs/Gates2012_full.pdf

Putwain, D., & Best, N. (2012). Do highly test anxious students respond differentially to fear

- appeals made prior to a test? *Research in Education*, 88(1), 1-10.
- Riggs, L. (2013). Why do teachers quit? And why do they stay? Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2013/10/why-do-teachers-quit/280699/>
- Roloff, M. & Brown, L. (2011). Extra-role time, burnout and commitment: The power of promises kept. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 74 (4), 450-474.
- Rosales, J. (2012) How bad education policies demoralize teachers. Retrieved from <http://neatoday.org/2012/02/07/how-bad-education-policies-demoralize-teachers/>
- Salvador, R. & Wilson, C. (2002). Teacher shortage question unraveled: NCTAF challenges the nation to address the teacher retention crisis.
- Sanders, W. Research findings from the Tennessee Value Added Assessment System database: Implications for evaluation and research. Retrieved from https://www.sas.com/govedu/edu/ed_eval.pdf
- Shields, P., & Rangarajan, N. (2013) A Playbook for Research Methods: Integrating Conceptual Frameworks and Project Management. Stillwater, OK: New Forum Press.
- Sieberer-Nagler, K. (2016). Effective classroom-management and positive teaching. *English Language Teaching*, 9(1), 163-172.
- Smith, J. & Osborn, M. (2003). Interpretive phenomenological analysis. In J.A. Smith (Ed.) *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods* (pp.51-80). London: Sage.

Social Research Methods. (2006). Phenomenology. Retrieved from

<https://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/qualapp.php>

Sparks, S. (2015). Key to vocabulary gap is quality of conversation, not dearth of words.

Retrieved from <https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2015/04/22/key-to-vocabulary-gap-is-quality-of.html>

Strauss, V. (2012). Merit pay and loss aversion: Nonsense studies. Retrieved from

https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/post/merit-pay-and-loss-aversion-nonsense-studies/2012/07/23/gJQA5GKs4W_blog.html?utm_term=.0a56250501c0

Taylor, J. (2013). The power of resilience: A theoretical model to empower, encourage, and retain teachers. *The Qualitative Report*, 18(70), 1-25.

The New Teacher Project. (2012). The irreplaceables: Understanding the real retention crisis in America's urban schools. Retrieved from

https://tntp.org/assets/documents/TNTP_Irreplaceables_2012.pdf

Trafford, B. (2016). Teachers have a human need to be appreciated. Retrieved from

<https://www.tes.com/news/school-news/breaking-views/teachers-have-a-human-need-be-appreciated-and-recognized-extra-they>

Tye, B. B., & O'Brien, L. (2002). Why are experienced teachers leaving the profession? *Phi Delta Kappa*, 84, 24-32.

von der Embse, N., Kilgus, S.P., Solomon, H., Bowler, M., & Curtiss, C. (2015). Initial

- development and factor structure of the Educator Test Stress Inventory. *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*.
- Walsh, F. (1998). *Strengthening family resilience*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Walsh, F. (2006). *Strengthening family resilience second edition*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Wang, J., & Odell, S. (2002). Mentored learning to teach according to standards-based reform: A critical review. Retrieved from <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.3102/00346543072003481>
- Watson, D., Charner-Laird, M., Kirkpatrick, C., Szczesiul, S. & Gordon, P. (2006). Effective teaching/Effective urban teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 57(4), 395-409.
- Weiner, L. 1993. *Preparing teachers for urban schools*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Wiener, R., and Pimentel, S. (2017) *Practice What You Teach: Connecting Curriculum & Professional Learning in Schools*, The Aspen Institute.
- Weiss, A., & Fantuzzo, J. (2001). Multivariate impact of health and caretaking risk factors on the school adjustment of first graders. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 29, 141-160.
- Werner, E. (1993). Risk, resilience, and recovery: Perspectives from Kauai longitudinal study. *Development and Psychopathology*, 5, 503-515.
- Wilhelm, T. (2015). Principal as instructional coach: What successes have you celebrated lately? Retrieved from <https://education.cu-portland.edu/blog/leaders-link/principals-must-celebrate-successes/>

Wiseman, D., & Hunt G., (2008). Best practice in motivation and management in the classroom (2nd ed). Springfield: Charles Thomas.